

THE
Publishers' Weekly
A JOURNAL
SPECIALLY DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE

BOOK AND STATIONERY TRADE.

[With which is incorporated the American Literary Gazette and Publishers' Circular, established 1852.]

F. LEYPOLDT, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER, 37 PARK ROW, NEW YORK.

VOL. X. No. 4.

NEW YORK, July 22, 1876.

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THE AMERICAN BOOK TRADE CONVENTION.

HELD AT PHILADELPHIA, JULY 11-13, 1876.

[THIRD ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN BOOK-
TRADE ASSOCIATION.]

THE CONVENTION.

WE give up this number to a full report, from the official stenographer's notes, of the proceedings of the Third Annual Convention of the American Book-Trade Association. The report gives all the details in full, except where it was desirable to condense mere routine proceedings into a few words, or in a few cases where gentlemen "speaking out" before the Convention as though they were in Committee of the Whole, happened upon matters in which they do not desire such very frank utterances to be put in print.

In reviewing this report, it will generally be agreed that the Convention has not been so important a one as either of the two preceding. That this is so must in all honesty be laid at the doors of the weather. There was at no time cause of apprehension of such serious differences of opinion as might endanger the Association itself; for, with the thermometer nearer 100 degrees than 90, no one held his opinions with sufficient tenacity to make very much of a fight about them. This accounts for the manner in which important resolutions, which should have called for general debate, went by the board at the third session, either *pro* or *con*, without discussion. As the *Tribune* said on its editorial page, "the thermometer rose and cut off debate, and the Convention adjourned." This accounts also, and must be taken as some apology, for the discourtesy with which two or three speakers were received on Thursday morning. Those gentlemen may fairly be asked to exercise a Christian forgiveness in view of the unchristian height of the mercury.

Perhaps the best thing, after all, that the Convention did, was to give the Committee next year to call the trade together at some other time than the hottest of the year. There seemed to be no question but that Philadelphia was the only place to meet this year, and the active hospitality of the Philadelphia trade, culminating in

the delightful excursion to Atlantic City, made all the visitors feel as much at home and as happy as could any mortals be under the depressing influences of—that thermometer again! There was some misunderstanding as to the hotel arrangements at first, owing to the fact that the manager of the house, with whom the Committee had made the arrangements, had left his position at the Belmont Hotel without leaving instructions as to his arrangements. But these difficulties were in the end settled satisfactorily and in accordance with the terms of the Committee's circular.

But to return to the question of the Convention. We have to thank the weather at least for the blessing that there was no over-legislation. Even in the Committee of Thirty, which met two sweltering nights in succession in the lobby of the Belmont Hotel, there was little disposition to "crowd matters." The most interesting discussions of the meetings, such as they were, took place here. But it is the purpose of the ingenious device of this Committee, that its proceedings should not be at all reported, so that members of the trade might be here absolutely outspoken in their expression of opinion. Mr. Lee's invention of this "grinding committee," started at Put-in-Bay, deserves real commendation; for in discussing the manifold ramifications of private business which must influence the general action of the Convention, members must feel that what they say shall not be misinterpreted through ears or pens that do not understand in full their position and the bearings of what they say. It is therefore wise to have such a committee appointed, and to admit to its deliberation freely all other members of the Convention, as has been the usual custom. The chief evil connected with it was apparent at the last session, when under the rules that all business should be referred to that committee, holding even when it was known that the committee would not meet again, the most important subjects of discussion were choked off.

We have suggested that the Convention was wise in avoiding over-legislation ; but it seems to us, on the other hand, that it lost its golden opportunity in failing to make any recommendation on the question of retail prices. The argument was brought up that this would be interfering with what was peculiarly the publishers' business ; but this argument had really only a specious application. The publishers, in the first place, would, we think, have been very glad, as one of them stated, to know what was the general opinion of the trade on this subject. Moreover, it was not proposed to do more than to recommend action to them, or to commend them for action already taken. Any thing further, it was universally understood, would be an improper attempt at interference, and not to be thought of. Those in the Committee of Thirty who had animation enough to talk very much on the subject, seemed rather to oppose than favor the proposed reductions ; but there was really no general discussion on the subject, and so far as the spirit of the Convention could be judged from its applause, a considerable majority was in favor of the proposed movement. The action of the Osgood firm met with considerable approval, and though the reports of the local organizations were overlooked in some way, it was understood that almost all of them expressed an opinion in favor of a like reduction in prices and discounts. Mr. Armstrong's capital speech pointed, it seemed to us, the real road out of the difficulties of the trade, and it was received with very hearty applause. We believe that if the question had been squarely acted upon at the Convention, the reduction of prices and discounts would have received its general approval.

In fact, the difficulties which experience had pointed out in the present methods of reform seemed to suggest that the reduction proposed was the natural culmination of the reform movement. This was the idea of the originators of the reform at the West, and it has always been held up by the PUBLISHERS' WEEKLY, and without much challenge from the trade. There are difficulties in carrying out generally any restrictive measures of the reform, such as the retail-price rule ; and it would certainly be better if we could, by return to lower retail prices, reach a condition of things in which the retail price shall be the real price, regardless of privileged classes. There are many who believe that this can not be done, but we prophesy that they will some day be convinced. The chief objection seemed to turn in many minds upon the mistaken theory that 20 per cent was meant to be a general rate of reduction, instead of, as it is, the extreme limitation of that reduction. In

other words, if a dealer gets but 25 per cent discount on his books, he is not to give 20 per cent, but to adhere on those lines to retail prices, and in that way he would fare better than under previous arrangements of the trade. Mr. Roger's resolution, it seems to us, met the various objections which had been made against the reduction, or the method of its recommendation, and we gather that if it had been put to a square vote before the Convention, at a temperature somewhat under 90 degrees, it would have been carried by a considerable majority of the vote. We presume, however, that the non-action of the Convention will not deter publishers from taking such steps as seem to them advisable ; and we believe that the reduction of prices, in the discriminating way in which only it is possible, is certain to go on. It is to be hoped that the progress in this direction will, to a considerable extent, do away with the difficult question which honestly perplexes the Philadelphia trade, a definition of the "large buyer" phrase which should put different sections of the trade on an equal footing.

The general dulness of the trade must of course account for a part of the discouragement of the Convention. It was not the reform which has produced this dulness, but the bad times, from which the reform hopes to lead out. Mr. Hammett, who is a jobber—a class which has not been treated too well in these hard times—and spoke, it should be noted, especially from the jobber's point of view, gave a very blue account of affairs in Boston. But Boston is a city which, of all, has suffered most from the bad times, and has been most plagued by support of the undersellers, and by consequent and other failures. Boston will see better times for the reform as soon as she sees better times in general business. Cincinnati, on the other hand, offered proof that the reform could be carried out even under its present difficulties ; and altogether we see no reason to alter our abiding opinion that the reform is doing no little to counteract bad times, instead of continuing them into the future.

It is scarcely necessary to refer to the constitutional amendments passed, except to say that they are all toward the more practical working of the Association.

The Arbitration Committee is now in such shape that it can do much more efficient work. The Book Fair is identified with the Association by the adoption of the Book Fair Committee among its standing committees, and the appointment of an efficient general secretary, who can be trusted to exercise a general supervision over the affairs of the Association, will be a considerable improvement, provided care be taken against the danger that the Associa-

tion be made a bureaucracy in the hands of its own agent, a rock against which more than one useful organization has split. The election of a new set of officers was a wise move on the part of the Committee on Nominations, and their report presented a very strong list of names on all the committees. We think they could not have been better men. We must be pardoned in referring to the delicate action of Mr. Lee, for the purpose of saying that his manliness of feeling in declining office must add to the affection generally felt for him in the trade.

And so the Convention of 1876 is a matter of the past. Next year let us hope that the thermometer will treat us better—or, rather, that the Committee on Assemblies, with its new power, will dodge the thermometer altogether.

Meantime, gentlemen of the Association, let us have faith in each other and faith in the work before us. That is the one thing needful, and with it the trade should find itself a year hence freed from many of the anxieties and burdens which have for the last few years so dangerously threatened it.

REPORT OF THE CONVENTION.

THE Third Annual Convention of the book trade, under the auspices of the American Book-Trade Association, opened at the Judges' Hall, Centennial Grounds, Philadelphia, Tuesday afternoon, July 11th, 1876. At 4 o'clock the Convention was called to order by President Randolph, and Mr. J. B. Mitchell (of J. B. Lippincott & Co.), Chairman of the Local Committee on Reception, delivered the following address of welcome:

Address of Welcome.

Mr. President and gentlemen of the American Book Trade: On behalf of our Committee and those whom we represent, the publishers and booksellers of Philadelphia, I have the honor to say that we rejoice to see so many of you here, and to extend to you a most cordial welcome to our city. It is one of the agreeable features of the Centennial Exposition that it has induced you to hold your meetings here, and thus afford us the opportunity of meeting you personally, and of interchanging views with you. It is good for us, as Americans, to meet here at the completion of the century, and witness the grand and inspiring evidences of our growth in all directions for the last hundred years. It will give fresh zest to our patriotism, and to that of our countrymen and countrywomen, to meet here in the city where the wisdom of Franklin and the eloquence of Adams animated the faith of our ancestors; and where Washington, amidst the scenes of his bitter trials, sustained the spirits of our brave but slender army; and where Jefferson gave to the world those grand text-words of Human Rights, of National Liberty, and of Independence. I say that it is good for us all to meet here in the city where our nation was born, and renew our faith by the memories

of the past, and take fresh inspiration for the future.

You will, of course, devote a portion of your time to the examination of the Exhibition, and I know you will enjoy with a great zest the magnificent display brought together from all parts of the world. You will take interest in observing the progress that has been made by the youngest nation of the earth in agriculture, skill, and the arts, and in contrasting it with that of the older nations, including the oldest nation; for you will find their exhibits side by side. To refer to matters of interest in our own department, you may see in the Pennsylvania Educational Building a representative school-room of 1776, with the meagre and crude appointments of its day, contrasted with the highly-advanced and almost luxurious appliances and aids to instruction of the present time. You may observe in Machinery Hall the old printing-press of Franklin, upon which, by hard labor, he could produce perhaps 150 impressions per hour, side by side with the Messrs. Hoe & Co.'s latest invention, the Web perfecting-press, printing 32,000 copies of a newspaper, on both sides, in the same time. The exhibition has many such contrasts, and how eloquent are they of meaning, and how suggestive are they of the wonderful agencies discovered and applied during the century! Steam, the telegraph, and the power printing-press, what have they not accomplished, and how have they changed the condition of the civilized world! It is one of the higher duties of our calling, allied as it is to literature, to take careful notes of such results.

In examining the exhibit of the Book Department, you will be gratified to realize that the advance in skill in the production of paper, printing, bookbinding, and the manufacture of books generally has been very great, rivalling in general excellence and luxury of design the productions of the old world. I have no doubt that you will become much absorbed, and that you will find the Exhibition a serious rival to the Convention in its demands on your time.

In the proceedings of the Convention we hope that you may be governed by such wise judgment that your actions may give to our common business a more solid prosperity for the future. But do not impose trammels on its operations; rather secure for it that freedom, wholesome and natural, so characteristic of the spirit of our institutions. [*Applause.*]

It is our wish, gentlemen, when you shall have finished the labors of the Convention, that you should spend a day with us in visiting Atlantic City, and I now have the honor of extending to you an invitation from the members of the Philadelphia Book Trade to that effect, for Friday, the 14th inst.

I have the pleasure to announce that the Union League and the Reform Club of our city have tendered you the privileges of their respective club-houses during your visit.

In conclusion, gentlemen, our Committee will be glad to be of any service to you, and trust you will freely call upon us; and we hope sincerely that your visit to Philadelphia may be in all respects one of interest and enjoyment to you.

In responding to the address of welcome, President Randolph spoke as follows:

THE PRESIDENT.—We beg that the Committee

will accept the hearty thanks of this Convention, not only for the eloquent terms in which the welcome was extended, but also for the promise of making this a memorable gathering of the trade. I remember Philadelphia, gentlemen, nearly forty years ago, when Grigg & Elliott were still on Second street, and Carey & Hart were on the corner of Fourth and Chestnut streets, and in days when Philadelphia, like New York, was a much smaller place than it is to-day, and when such a gathering as this was never dreamed of. I am sure we shall have abundant opportunity to test the hospitality of our friends, and I have no doubt that the amplitude of that hospitality will meet all our wants and desires.—Now the meeting of the Convention will be regularly opened by prayer by the Rev. Mr. Shuey, of Dayton, Ohio.

PRAYER.

O Lord God, our Heavenly Father, we come to thank thee that thou hast spared our lives through another year; that in our several places of business and spheres of action thou hast been kindly with us, and given to us those blessings that thou hast deemed best for us. Now we are brought together on this very memorable occasion, in thy kind providence, to deliberate once more upon the interests of the book trade—that great work of diffusing knowledge and wisdom among our fellow-men. O Lord, we pray that this Centennial meeting here may be one of peculiar interest and profit to all, socially, in business respects, and in every way. May the blessing of the Lord rest upon us, and upon our work, while we are together. We thank thee that we are permitted to give here the Centennial expression of thanks and praise for the exhibition of our material blessings and wealth; we praise thee because thou hast permitted us to live a hundred years, and to grow as we have grown. O Lord, hear us and bless us; bless the cause of truth, and bless every good work everywhere, and every interest of mankind, and at last save us for Jesus' sake. Amen.

President Randolph then delivered his opening address, as follows:

President's Address.

Gentlemen of the Convention: It is a matter for congratulation that by the courtesy of the Director-General we are permitted to meet in this hall where, at a later day, judgment is to be passed, and the awards made, on the latest exhibit of the world's productive industry. In this vast display of the products of the genius of labor and of art—fostered under all climes, by the manipulating hand of all races—where the unerring movements of complex machinery well illustrates the swift, progressive forces of the time, and the long galleries of art, the polished gold and gems, and the gorgeous fabrics of the loom, are the witnesses of refinement and repose—in this vast display how simple and unpretentious are the products we exhibit! How few of all the surging multitude, that like the ebbing or the flowing sea daily passes along our corridors, pause, even for a moment, in the presence of that silent and majestic company we have gathered there! There are the great and the lesser historians—from him who first gathered the traditions of the unlettered ages down to those who in our day, as

in others, have from manuscript and record written out the story of all lands and nations. There, too, are the great and lesser masters of song and story, who from all time—from the daydawn of the race until now—have played upon the passions with consummate skill, or kindled the affections to a holy purpose. There also are the intrepid travellers and daring explorers, the discoverers of new continents and the developers of new lands: and with these may be found all the great economists, philosophers, students, teachers, and inventors, with their perfected thoughts, principles, or plans for the education and elevation of their fellow-men.

What if their lips are silent there; if the great multitude passes heedlessly or all unconsciously by? There are some who will pause there in the manner of the reverential pilgrim who has sought and found "a Palestine, a Mecca of the Mind," that they may honor the great teachers and prophets of the world! If from that state into which the spirits of so many of them have passed they look down upon this opulent display of the world's progress, how might they trace and measure the relation which their mortal life, and the wide diffusion of their thoughts and acts, hold to it all! While every age and nation has given to the world some single great feature to mark its advancing progress, not until the nineteenth century did the civilized nations gather in one place the combined specimens of their products for the admiration and wonderment of all. Those who seek to analyze the cause as they record the fact may perhaps overlook one significant source of it all. If it be true that the nations lie closer together to-day than ever before; if the rail and the engine and the wire bind them together, it still remains true that the simple transactions of commerce between men of different nationalities are not sufficient in themselves to hold in check the selfish passions and forge the bonds of brotherhood. It is the church, the teacher, the school, the newspaper, and the book that with life and lip and pen continually formulate and proclaim in myriad forms that the interest of the few is the interest of the many; that by a jealous regard of the rights of others, individual rights are best maintained!

If the grand doctrine has not yet been universally accepted, it is not to be denied that each day gives it a wider recognition, and it may well be asked how far this calling of yours, as distributors of thought and sentiment and doctrine, has had to do with the change that has been wrought; how far also our labors, and the labors of those who have preceded us, as disseminators of useful knowledge, have trained and stimulated those whose works of genius and handiwork cover these acres and crowd these corridors. As I have already said, no previous century ever saw an exposition similar to this;—may I not add that none other ever had such an array of wise teachers, in so great a number of schools and colleges?—none have been so prolific in inventive industry; none have had such a newspaper press, and none such a literature—a literature not only for the wise and noble, but one adapted to all classes and conditions of men. These are the elemental forces that made possible the earlier expositions, as well as the later one, and it is the ever-increasing influence of these forces that shall

give such scope and grandeur to those that may hereafter follow, that each succeeding one shall be rated as more wonderful than the last.

And so, gentlemen, holding as you do a close relation to one of these great factors, as your bewildered eye wanders over the endless display of wealth and form and beauty and force gathered on these grounds, as you recall all that they represent and promise of material prosperity and intellectual culture and social advancement, take to yourselves the thought that the business you pursue has had no mean or unimportant ministry in it all. Congratulate yourselves that you are American bookmakers and booksellers in this memorable year of the republic! Take to yourselves a bit of honest, manly pride, and congratulate each other on the existence of an organization without which the assembling of yourselves together had not been possible.

And now, gentlemen, coming to the contemplation of the objects and the affairs of our association, I admit at the outset that we have not yet fully accomplished all its aims. We have suffered some disappointments and delays arising from the want of a hearty co-operation on the part of some, or a positive indifference on the part of others. With all other branches of trade and industry we have to bear the pressure of the times. Overstocked markets and urgent necessities have doubtless led here and there to the violation of essential rules. The publisher has had more than once just cause for complaint against the dealer, as the dealer has had his against the publisher. But what then? Has there been no progress? Are we no better off than we were a year or two ago? Are these reported violations to be taken as a confirmation of the prophecies of its enemies that the reform movement has failed? I tell you, gentlemen, that it has not failed! [*Applause.*] I tell you as its friends, I tell its enemies, if there be any here, that whatever is true and just and honest *can* not fail. [*Applause.*] It may suffer hindrances in its movements—that is the common fate of all reforms—it may be set back for a time by the unwise exactions or the impatient indiscretions of its friends, or by the passing triumph of its enemies; but the vital principle in it nevertheless remains, and sooner or later will reassert its power.

Does any one mean to say that in a time when reform is the watchword of the two political parties of the country—when on this a great issue has been joined and a great battle is to be fought—that in such a time as this we should declare ourselves incapable of reforming what we all freely confess are great abuses in our own domain of trade? Are we so weak and poor and mean as that? Shall each of us this coming autumn as individuals strike, through one or the other of the great political parties, at the evils in the state, and straightway become indifferent to the evils in our own household? I will not believe it! I know you too well to think that; for the principle that underlies this reform movement of ours is essential not only for the maintenance of our honor, but for our business safety. The greater and the less are to be found in it. If any of you were insensible, as I know you are not, to the greater, I would then base my offer on the lesser. For no sagacious publisher, no wise dealer, could afford to let this movement fail. His money and his business life are in it.

And I believe it to be true that during these last three years of business perplexity and trial—in which men in all departments of trade have had to grapple with unforeseen difficulties, and stand face to face with disaster—that but for the pecuniary strength which this association gave the book trade of the country in securing to it a living profit in the transaction of business, the publishers and jobbers of New York and Philadelphia, of Boston and Chicago, would have had a still larger amount of protested paper and compromised accounts. [*Demonstration.*]

I implore you, gentlemen, not to be deceived by rumors and conjectures as to any thing like a general violation of the rules of the association. It is admitted that there have been violations, but I honestly believe that they have been few in number. Much has been said by some about these violations—much use has been made of the fact by others under a misapprehension as to their extent and importance. In our discussion here we shall doubtless get at the actual facts. I think also that we shall hear that, since our meeting at Niagara, under the operation of the rules the percentage of the profit of the dealer on regular sales has been better than in previous years. And I would ask now that at the proper time explicit statements be made on this important point.

But if this association had never adopted the 20 per cent rule—or having done so, that should fail—those of you who have labored in it have not been without compensation. It was not to the credit of men engaged in such a business that they should be without an organization of some kind; and it is not among the minor advantages that I place the social intercourse that has grown out of our association. Never in the history of our trade have we better understood or appreciated each other than now; never so fully comprehended the relation which should exist between those engaged in such a calling. We have lifted that calling to a place in which we can see its many and beautiful perfections. We have learned the more to respect the better we came to know each other. We have found that there was a substantial unity in the diversities of our calling—that the many parts were after all but one; and that those who were so dependent on each other could ill afford to dwell apart. And so it has come to pass that many of us are no longer strangers and aliens, but brethren. Rely upon it that those who are to follow us will not suffer this feature of our organization to perish. In that near day, the dawn of which already purples the sky, when the United States shall be the greatest and the best book market of the world, and your sons and heirs shall see that which we scarcely dared to hope, or rarely dreamed, this good feature will be still more widely diffused only to be the more potential. For, say what some men will, the world does grow more generous with age; and he who follows a calling that ought to make men wiser and better, should himself unconsciously increase in all manly, all Christian virtues.

And now, with the exception of two important subjects I will not detain you to speak of the business that is to come before you. The first is that of public libraries—why, gentlemen, that is a subject that is so much discussed that there seems as though there is no business done in the United States in connection with the dis-

position of books except the books sold to public libraries. It seems as if there is not a book sold to any one else except to public libraries! [*Laughter.*] Under this head may be included those of villages and towns, as well as those of States and institutions maintained out of public funds or by private endowment. The large number of these institutions, their great value to the communities in which they are located, together with the fact that they are large and continuous purchasers of books, have led to some misunderstandings between the local dealer, the city jobber, and the publisher. The most notable violations of the 20 per cent rule have arisen out of transactions with these institutions. These violations are not to be charged to the managers of the libraries of these institutions, but to the failure sometimes of the local dealer, sometimes of the jobber, and again of the publisher, to adhere rigidly to the rule of the association. It would seem to be a perfect passion of the American book trade to work for the libraries of the country at a loss of from 5 to 10 per cent, or for a nominal profit of 10 per cent. It is a perfect passion. I never saw any thing like it. They go out of the way, violate rules, run around and send out special messengers, sell a thousand dollars' worth of books and make \$50 on them! The only way I can account for it is by the spirit of benevolence which characterizes our trade. It is the most benevolent trade I ever saw. I never saw any thing like it. [*Applause.*] Certainly, in view of the fact that until within the last year or two a very large proportion of these institutions were accustomed to purchase at very nearly the lowest trade rates, it is not surprising that there should be some resistance to the present rule of the association, and persistent efforts made to obtain better terms; and yet my own impression is that the intelligent and sagacious gentlemen who are at the head of these institutions would readily accept the new terms, if but fully assured that 20 per cent was the very best discount to be obtained anywhere. [*Demonstration.*] The difficulty which has arisen in this connection is of your own creation, and the remedy lies entirely within yourselves. Bear in mind the fact that these institutions never asked for better terms until, in the competitions of business, the trade offered them; and it may be said with safety, I think, that up to a year ago the profit on the sales to these institutions, when furnished otherwise than direct from the publisher, did not average 10 per cent, and so made an actual loss of from 5 to 10 per cent to the dealer who furnished them—if it be considered that the average cost of transacting his business was from 15 to 20 per cent.

The character of the libraries of this country is too well known to lead to the belief that they desire to make any such conditions of purchase. They understand—which is a point some of the publishers, some of the jobbers, and some of the retailers seem not to understand—that the yearly purchases of even the largest of these institutions do not equal in amount those of many a single bookseller in a thriving town. They also know that no dealer can allow more than 20 per cent and profit by the transaction. They also fully comprehend the important relation which the book trade holds to

the educational forces of the country, and that the dealer, deriving no portion of his support from public or private funds, must obtain his living solely from the profits of his business.

I commend the whole subject to your careful consideration, and in the fullest confidence that you will find the libraries of the country ready to accept your rule whenever you are ready to strictly maintain it among yourselves.

The second important subject has reference to present retail prices and their possible reduction. It is undoubtedly true that there has lately come up a demand for low prices, but how far this is well founded is a question for mature consideration. It is susceptible of proof, I think, that the publisher to-day does not realize any better net profit for his business than he did before the war. Not only is the ordinary cost of production largely increased, and still more enhanced by the superior mechanical execution, but so also is the cost of distribution. Besides, there has been a gradual but very considerable reduction in the retail prices as compared with those of ten or even five years ago. My own conviction is that beyond certain lines or classes of books which have a fictitious retail price, and on which excessive trade rates of discount are allowed, there is little margin for a reduction in retail prices, unless—and that is an important point for you to consider—there is a corresponding reduction in the trade discounts. Whatever is done must be of a discriminating character. The public has never objected to paying a *reasonable* price for the book it wanted. Who finds fault with the price of such books as the Life of Macaulay, or the Little Classic Hawthorne, or the volumes of the Social Science Series, or the new editions of Prescott and Bancroft? Are they not all reasonable enough in price? Do their publishers reap any undue profit on their manufacture and sale? What would help the trade and the public more than any possible reduction in prices would be for the publishers to make fewer poor books and more better ones! Your shelves are loaded down with books that ought never to have been published. [*Applause.*] And you put them there because they could be had at a *large* discount!

It may be well, in your discussion of this question, to bear in mind that the publishers are the final judges in this matter, and that there is not likely to be any general reduction in the prices of current and standard salable books; and also to consider further whether it would be possible for you to successfully prosecute your business on a reduced rate of discount. We have not yet reached that point where there shall be no privileged buyers, and until we do it would seem to be impossible for the trade to prosper on any other scale of discounts than that which is now allowed by the great publishing houses. [*Applause.*]

The reading of the minutes of the last Convention was dispensed with, since they had been given fully in the trade journals; and opportunity was then given for the enrolment of those present, cards most convenient for the purpose having been prepared by a Committee on Enrolment composed of N. R. Monachesi, Henry H. Kimball, and Chas. A. Clapp, in the following form:

American Book-Trade Association.

PHILADELPHIA, July 11, 1876.

Name _____

Firm Name _____

Residence _____

Visitor or Member _____

The President said that owing to the intense heat it is not proposed to continue the session much longer, and Mr. Ticknor says he is to have a fresh east wind brought on to-morrow morning from Boston.

Committee on Assemblies.

The written report of the Committee on Assemblies was then read by R. R. Bowker, of New York, chairman. After detailing the reasons which led to the change of base from Niagara to Philadelphia, and explaining the seeming vacillation of the Committee in its several reports through the trade journals, as caused by the difficulty of making arrangements on reduced terms, the report continued:

The Committee would respectfully submit to the Convention the question whether a change of date from that designated in the constitution is not advisable, or, better, whether the date should not be left to the Committee on Assemblies for each year. There is much to be said on both sides. A fixed date has the advantage that the members know a long time beforehand at what time to arrange for their absence at convention. On the other hand it has in each year been found very difficult to effect satisfactory hotel arrangements at the date named. The month of June, perhaps, would be convenient, or else a date farther on toward the end of the summer.

Another question which arose during the work of the Committee may perhaps properly be referred to. It was suggested at the time of the Book Fair that the only committee of the Association that had jurisdiction over the Fair as a meeting of the Association, was the Committee on Assemblies, inasmuch as the original Committee on Book Fair was appointed as a special committee by the Convention of 1874, and was not continued by that of 1875. Although there was some ground for considering this a constitutional view of the case, the Committee felt that it was not constituted for that purpose, and declined, therefore, to take any steps in the matter, and the plans for the Fair were carried out for the most part under the direction of the managers, with occasional consultation with one or two members of the old Fair Committee. This Committee would therefore suggest to the Convention either that a Committee on Book Fair be added to the standing committees provided for by the constitution, which should be appointed each year and hold active control of that institution, or that the Committee on Assemblies be remodelled, and the appointments made with a view to its conduct of the Fair itself. The danger that the Fair itself should virtually pass out of the control of the Association—as happened in the case of the permanent and therefore nominal

committee which had charge of the old trade sales—should be provided against at the beginning of the system. At the Book Fair of last year the Executive Committee and the Committee on Assemblies united in appointing a Committee under whose excellent arrangements the pleasant dinner which concluded the summer Fair was held.

In providing for full information for and full attendance at the Convention, the Committee on Assemblies has sent requests to the various committees and minor organizations to prepare full reports in writing, for which the rest of this session has been set apart, and also invitations to leading members of the American trade, to judges in books and stationery (of whom M. Fouret, the French representative, is with us), and to representatives of foreign trades at the Exhibition, to be present and participate in the Convention.

In making such arrangements for the Convention as the Executive Committee decided devolved upon it, the Committee on Assemblies has suggested that the ensuing sessions of the Convention should be confined, if possible, to one morning session a day, opening at half-past nine. If the Convention chooses to adopt this suggestion, it will afford opportunity for the members to visit the Exposition itself in the afternoon, and thus ensure better attendance while the sessions are being held. The display of books, stationery, etc., in the Exhibition is of very great interest, and members will find it well worth while to devote as much of their time as they can spare to viewing it.

The Committee, in discharging by this report their duty for the year, have only to hope that both in their sight-seeing and in their business work, the members of the Convention of 1876 will return to their homes generally feeling that their days at Philadelphia have been pleasantly and profitably spent.

R. R. BOWKER,
B. H. TICKNOR,
C. A. CLAPP.

The Committee of Thirty.

Mr. Lee moved the appointment of a committee of the trade, consisting of thirty members, to whom shall be referred all matters of the trade: This was carried, and the following committee was appointed by the Chair:

J. M. Cushing, Baltimore.
H. H. West, Milwaukee.
J. L. Hammett, Boston.
H. E. Simmons, New York.
H. T. Coates, Philadelphia.
George Woods, Philadelphia.
R. R. Bowker, New York.
H. H. Vale, Cincinnati.
W. A. Ingham, Cleveland.
W. H. Watson, Aurora, Ill.
W. H. Gross, Hartford.
B. H. Ticknor, Boston.
Charles A. Clapp, New York.
Charles Humphreys, Adrian, Mich.
Charles W. Eaton, Grand Rapids, Mich.
Samuel Rogers, Lockport, N. Y.
Rev. W. J. Shuey, Dayton, O.
Alex. Hill (Robert Clarke & Co.), Cincinnati.
W. F. Draper, Andover, Mass.
A. C. Barnes, New York.
I. E. Sheldon, "
William Lee, Boston.

Charles T. Dillingham, New York.
 H. H. Kimball, Philadelphia.
 Robert Porter, "
 Charles Wiley, New York.
 F. H. Dodd, "
 D. H. Carroll, Baltimore.
 Chas. G. Collins, Am. News Co., New York.
 W. T. Tibbetts, Providence, R. I.

Mr. Lee moved to add to the list the names of the officers of the American Book-Trade Association, which motion prevailed.

THE PRESIDENT.—We have one other resolution, and we will let you go if you promise to come back promptly in the morning. There are other committees to report, but I think it is too hot, and I tell you we will have the east wind in the morning, especially if we get up a discussion. We could start an east wind here, now, in about five minutes, but we don't want to cool you off too suddenly.

A resolution was adopted that the reports of committees, those that have been read and those yet to be read, be referred to the Committee of Thirty.

Revision of Constitution.

On motion of Mr. Lee, a Committee of Five, consisting of A. D. F. Randolph, J. M. Cushing, W. F. Draper, A. C. Barnes, and I. E. Sheldon, was appointed to prepare a revised edition of the constitution, by-laws, etc., of the Association, and report at a subsequent meeting during this Convention. On motion, Mr. N. R. Monachesi was added to this committee.

Notice was given to the Committee of Thirty to meet this evening at eight o'clock, in Parlor B, Belmont Hotel.

THE PRESIDENT.—Mr. Crawford, the gentleman in charge of the Kansas Exhibit, desires to extend a cordial invitation to this Convention to visit and examine that collection at any and all times. Now, gentlemen, you will be here promptly to-morrow morning at half-past nine, and perhaps we will not keep you but an hour and a half, and then you can have a good time all the rest of the day.

The Convention then adjourned.

Second Session—Wednesday Morning.

The Convention was called to order by the President a few minutes before ten o'clock.

The roll of committees was then called, but most were not ready to report. Among the last the President called for the report of the Committee on Circular Letters, A. D. F. Randolph, President. "Mr. Lee, of Boston, will you report?"

MR. LEE.—I think that report has not yet arrived by express.

THE PRESIDENT.—I think Mr. Black has a report which would come under the head of Reports of Local Organizations, and as the other members of the committees are not here, perhaps Mr. Black will read his report.

Mr. Black then read the following report:

Report from Philadelphia.

The trade here have no association in connection with the convention, but appointed an Arbitration Committee, whose business it was to hear complaints and adjust difficulties.

This Committee has found the trade willing to fully carry out the agreement of last year, and reports that Philadelphia has succeeded fully in maintaining the retail prices in retail sales, and in those cases where there was a difference of opinion, that the decisions of the Committee have been accepted and adopted.

Accompanying this are samples of the method by which this has been done.

One of the greatest difficulties the Committee has encountered in attaining the retail price in all cases arises from the fact that publishers of Bibles and prayer-books have no retail lists, and they would suggest the adoption of such prices and a rate of discount as with other books, instead of the present method of a wholesale list from which a small discount is made, and which gives neither the wholesale nor retail prices.

While the Committee feel that Philadelphia has done its full share in sustaining the reform movement, they are compelled to say that in many instances the working of the system has been to its disadvantage, and that if the benefits of reform are to be obtained, there must be a better understanding among the dealers in books, and a more faithful and thorough application of the spirit of the rules by both publishers and dealers.

They suggest that the Convention adopt the Philadelphia definition of the term "large buyer."

They suggest that the exceptions "school for school boards," and "school-books for schools supported by," etc., be stricken out of the agreement. The first because it puts the publisher in an antagonistic position to the local dealer, and the second because it makes an exception of the Catholic bookseller, which is altogether unfair.

JOHN A. BLACK,
 ALEX. KIRKPATRICK,
 GEORGE WOOD.

Arbitration Committee.

Committee of Arbitration.

THE PRESIDENT.—We now have the report of the Committee on Arbitration, Mr. Sheldon, of New York, Chairman.

MR. SHELDON.—The Committee on Arbitration have naturally had to come into closer and more personal contact with all these difficulties which were spoken of here yesterday afternoon and this morning. We were unfortunately the sewer into which all trouble and difficulties were poured; but one of the great reasons for not being able to act perhaps more effectively was that the Committee was so widely separated. It has been almost impossible to get any meetings of our Committee: only two members residing in New York, the others scattered over the country at great distances; and it was only yesterday that we could get anything like a meeting to which any report could be submitted. Our report was only yesterday brought before the Committee, such as could be gathered together, and there were some changes and modifications made, and as all this was done in the handwriting of the secretary, with your consent I shall ask the secretary to read this report. I don't mean to cast any reflections upon his handwriting, but it was necessarily done in haste, and I would prefer he should read it.

Mr. Monachesi read the following report:

In accordance with a resolution of Executive Committee dated March 23d, 1876, your Arbitration Committee has the honor to report that :

Since the Niagara Convention there have been received by this Committee numerous complaints, as was to be expected, relative to the working of what is known as the "twenty per cent rule," adopted by your body at that convention.

These complaints have in a large majority of cases been thoroughly investigated, with varying results. Strange as it may seem, by far the larger number of these complaints—those that were most bitter in their denunciations of individuals and expressing a hopeless lack of confidence in the general reform movement—were received from individuals not members of this association.

Most of these complaints have been of a trivial character, and when investigated found to be based upon error, and were of such a character that they should have been referred to and settled by local associations.

Very few questions involving a general trade principle have been brought before your Committee, and those decisions, for reasons to be hereafter explained, have not been published. It does not seem, in our judgment, to be the province of this committee to decide upon the justice of minor disagreements between local dealers, and so it has been our custom during the past year to refer such complaints to local associations where such existed, or to advise the formation of such associations. Many of these local associations have been formed upon our recommendation, the full number of which it is impossible for us to state; but in other cases the local dealers have failed to organize, after several attempts.

Many complaints have come to us from certain quarters that we have never published any important decisions, and seldom in any way, in sight of the whole trade, made ourselves known as a committee of arbitration.

We found very soon after organization that the members of this Committee were so few in number, and lived at such great distances, that it was impossible to bring them together for discussion or other business. We thoroughly tried the system of correspondence with each member, and found, in almost every case, that the question to be decided would be decided each time according to the tenor of our secretary's letter, and this it was impossible to avoid, as it was equally impossible within the limits of correspondence to inform each member of all the bearings of the question involved. And to ask an answer to a direct question was neither always possible nor satisfactory, and so the resident members of your Committee did not think it just to their colleagues at a distance to publish such wonderful decisions as they arrived at through the course of the mail, and bind them with their signatures as members of this Committee.

Aside from this, your Committee find such a diversity of opinion upon these trade questions that the decisions we have made, though made and mailed privately only to those most concerned, have created such dissatisfaction that we are at a loss to know what the effect would be had we published answers to many of the questions put to us. For these reasons it was decided among those members who see each other that the very least printed was for the best

interest of all concerned, as it was useless to raise so much unnecessary discussion by making public our opinions, and so your Committee has confined itself to mailing an opinion when asked for.

In view of these facts, your Committee would recommend that the constitution be so amended as to make the membership of this Committee at least ten in number, a majority of whom should be within such a distance of each other as to make it possible to hold quarterly meetings. With some such arrangement as this we think much more and better work could be performed.

Your Committee would also recommend that some legislation be brought to bear to prevent, if possible, the publishers and large jobbers competing with dealers for retail sales. This is a prolific source of complaint, and, in our judgment, does more than any one other cause to impede the course of reform.

Your Committee request the Convention to clearly define the classes of questions which the Arbitration Committee shall be required to decide. Your Committee also request the Convention to make a rule requiring every complaint made to the Arbitration Committee to be made in writing, stating the special violation of regulations complained of, and giving the full amount of the violation.

As to legislation, it is, in the judgment of your Committee, not possible nor desirable for this association to make definite or arbitrary laws and expect the entire trade to adhere to them; such a course is most contrary to the spirit of our general institutions, and can never make this association popular with the trade.

And considering that the present general tendency to reduce retail prices has been yielded to less in the book trade than in any other, it is, in our judgment, the greatest argument, and in fact proof, of the strength of our association; and we hope that this Convention will prove its wisdom by keeping within the general plan of recommendatory measures, and will not peril the influence already gained by any arbitrary enactments.

We think that the trade is to be congratulated upon the success of this rule. Through our correspondence your Committee feel in a position to state that this rule is now almost universal, although many complaints are received complaining of it.

All of which is most respectfully submitted.

Centennial Committee.

Mr. Knight, Secretary of the Association, then read the following report of the Centennial Committee:

Your Committee would respectfully report that as soon after their appointment as practicable they organized and consulted with the Centennial Commission as to the best method of obtaining a full and representative display of the publishing interest of the United States. From the very first they have met with the heartiest sympathy and most cordial co-operation from the Bureau of Installation, and to their assistance and advice the success of the exhibit is in great part due. They at once assigned to us a space in gross for the whole trade in the south-eastern corner of the Main Exhibition Building, one hundred and seventeen (117) feet in length by thirty-four (34) feet six (6) inches in breadth, and turned over to us

all the applications for space they had received, with full power to divide the allotment of space as we thought best. Neither in situation nor in size is this space altogether satisfactory; and if either the Committee or the Bureau of Installation had foreseen that the display of the book trade would have been as general and as imposing as it is, the space granted would undoubtedly have been more worthy of the book trade.

But it must be borne in mind that outside of Philadelphia the publishing houses were backward and indifferent as compared with other trades, and it was only after some exertion on the part of the Committee that a representative display was hoped for. While the minor industries were seizing the opportunity, and enthusiastically pressing their claims for space, many of the great publishing houses stood aloof, and only came in when it was too late for your Committee to demand the quantity of space we should have received. To this fact, and not to any negligence on the part of your Committee or unwillingness of the Commission, the cramped appearance of our exhibit is due. Finding that the Commission wished your Committee to take the entire charge of all applications, and to assign all space to exhibitors in our department, we asked the co-operation of the New York and Boston trade, and at a meeting of the Central Booksellers Association, in October, Messrs. Walter Appleton, G. H. Putnam, William Lee, and B. H. Ticknor were appointed to co-operate with us, and Mr. N. R. Monachesi was selected by them to act in their interests when they were unable to attend the meetings. It was early seen that only by the erection of a two-story pavilion could sufficient space be obtained to accommodate the applicants who now, as the time of opening the Exhibition drew near, came flocking in, and the plan designed by Mr. Henry Reck was adopted. Having done their utmost to arouse the latent enthusiasm of the trade, and to secure their proper representation, a sub-committee, consisting of Messrs. Blakiston, Remsen, and Monachesi, were appointed, and to them were delegated all the powers of the general committee in regard to the erection of the pavilion, the assignment of all spaces, and every thing that would forward the interests of all concerned. It is saying but little to state that, to their untiring energy and ceaseless watchfulness, the success of our exhibit is to be attributed. Says William D. Howells, in the *Atlantic Monthly*, "The show of book-making does us great honor." This, we think, will be re-echoed by all here present.

HENRY T. COATES, *Secretary*.

THE PRESIDENT.—This, perhaps, is not the time, gentlemen, to say any thing about the work of the Committee, or of the various committees; but I think that if any American bookseller has visited that department of the great Exhibition where our products stand, and has any thing else than a feeling of profound satisfaction and pride, he ought not to be an American bookseller. [Applause.] I want to say, gentlemen, Mr. Ticknor has just come in; I made an arrangement with him yesterday, if you remember, to bring on an east wind. He has been searching for it all night, has stayed away from the Convention for half an hour, and

has not brought the east wind with him, but says it is on its way. [Laughter.]

Book Fair Committee.

The Committee on Book Fair being again reached, Mr. Sheldon said that he had received a note from Mr. William H. Appleton, Chairman, stating that he was unable to prepare a written report, and requesting that he (Mr. Sheldon) prepare one; that in compliance with that request he had simply to report what had been done as he had been able to gather from members he had come in contact with.

Mr. Sheldon then read the following report:

The Special Committee on Book Fairs, or Booksellers' Exchange and Clearing-House, desire to report that since the last annual meeting of the American Book-Trade Association at Niagara Falls, three sales have been held, under the management of Messrs. George A. Leavitt & Co.

The first sale was held directly after the last Convention, commencing July 19th; its success was far beyond any thing your committee expected. During the week of the fair about double the amount was sold which had ever been disposed of at any previous "trade sale," and at prices satisfactory to both buyer and seller. The trade bought only such stock as they really needed, and the publishers were spared the usual sacrifice made at trade sales on stock which was not in demand in the markets of any of the buyers present. This form of selling books, giving special inducements in the way of time and prices, seems to your committee to be the true mode.

The second sale was held in October, which was doubtless too soon after the first sale. As to the advisability of holding a second sale at this date, your Committee were in great doubt and a good deal divided in opinion. From its results it is safe to assume now that it was a mistake.

The third sale was held in March of this year, before which, however, your Committee had decided that but two sales should be held in any one year, and fixed the dates for such sales as the last weeks in March and September each year.

The March sale was small in amount.

We look upon this system as still an experiment, and one which has been tried under peculiarly unfortunate circumstances. The business depression of the past year has been so great that success could hardly be expected at once.

We would recommend the continuance of the present plan for still another year. It is, doubtless, much better than to return to the old trade sales, and some form of special sale semi-annually seems to be required.

Your Committee would recommend, during the sitting of the Convention, a general discussion of the subject.

The publishers would be glad to have the views of the trade generally on this question. If the present form of sale is not satisfactory to the great mass of booksellers, the publishers have no desire to push it. On this question our interests are mutual.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

Executive Committee.

The report of the Executive Committee

being next called for, Mr. Lee read the following:

Gentlemen of the American Book-Trade Association: Your Executive Committee take this occasion to indulge in a few reflections touching the present condition of the trade, its bearing for good or ill on this Association, and the outlook for the future.

As none of us have any right to claim prophetic powers, we must follow the good old rule of judging the future by the past.

Two years ago, when the gathering of the book trade at Put-in-Bay took place, at which this Association was organized, the business of this country had already begun to feel that great depression which has steadily increased up to the present. The book trade was among the first to feel this change, and matters have gone from bad to worse, till to-day we can hardly tell where we are, or when we are to look or to hope for better things.

The book trade, I have said, was among the first departments of business to feel the change in the times; and the reason is not far to seek.

For some time it has been quite the fashion to talk economy; and not a few, either from fashion or from compulsion, have begun to practise it as well as talk it. But public economy and private economy do not work alike. When an item of saving has been made by State or national government, it is sure to be something that everybody can see and understand; but when a man cuts down his private expenses, this attempt at economy is almost sure to be where it is least likely to be known. The first saving is not in house, furniture, dress, or even jewelry—it is in *books*! Books are largely a luxury; and the man who a few years ago expended a thousand or several thousand dollars a year for books, may not buy a hundred dollars' worth this year. It is much more agreeable to read old books, to look over old engravings, than it is to wear old clothes, to use dilapidated furniture, or to live in a smaller house.

The rich, it is true, are not the largest purchasers of books; that great middle class, which comprises most of the intelligent men in every pursuit of life, are the ones on whom we depend for much the more important part of our sales. But men of this class are influenced in precisely the same way.

Even in the case of school-books, which, in a civilized country, may be reckoned among the necessities of life, the rule still holds good—the supply of arithmetics and grammars, geographies and spelling-books, will be stinted much sooner than the supply of tobacco.

Thus it happens that the book trade is among the first branches of business to feel the approach of bad times, and one of the last to be affected by the return of prosperity.

It was the condition of trade in general, and of the book trade in particular, which led to the formation of the American Book-Trade Association. As books began to sell more slowly, many tried to keep the sale up by reducing prices; and this went on till in many cases the profit was reduced to less than zero. It was the most natural thing in the world, under these circumstances, that the trade should begin to cast about for some remedy for so crying an evil; and it can not be denied that our Association has done much towards giving a healthier tone to the trade: it has done

as much, perhaps, as could reasonably be expected of such an Association in so short a time. Still a great deal remains to do—work that can not be done unless every man puts his shoulder to the wheel in right good earnest. It will not do for a portion of the trade to cheer and encourage us by words in all our attempts to bring book sales to a wholesome condition, and then study every artifice whereby they may “keep the word of promise to the ear and break it to our hope.” This kind of sharpness is easily seen through, and if those who practise it continue to be recognized as booksellers, and show no signs of repentance, then the Association must fail. The retailer must not expect that the publishers and jobbers are coming to the rescue if he himself remains inactive.

If the customers of the publishers and the jobbers take such active management of this Association as they ought, they can influence—aye, *demand*—protection of their interests.

If these views are correct, it would seem that the great requisites of permanence and success in this Association are, first, that it shall be as broad as our country, that it shall include every bookseller in the United States, from the rising sun in the East to the Golden Gate of the West—from the deep caverns of Lake Superior in the North to the magnificent domains of the Lone Star in the South; and second, that every member shall act strictly for the interest of the whole, without trick or subterfuge of any kind. Any thing less than this is failure.

It is also the opinion of your Committee that the burdens of this reform movement are not distributed as they ought to be.

Now, it is a very old theory, and doubtless quite a correct one, that rights and obligations must go together: that no man should enjoy the rights of a certain position without taking upon him all the obligations belonging to the same position. Taking this view of the case, we should say that the retail booksellers ought to be a very important, nay, by far the most important, element in this work of reform.

But, aside from any theory of right and justice, we have to view this question as a practical one, and ask, How can we continue this reform with the greatest chance of the best results?

Publishers and jobbers are ready, doubtless, to do all that can be best done by them. But they do not come in contact with the real readers—the consumers of books, as we may say—in the same manner as the retailers do. The real—perhaps we might better say the *ideal*—retail bookseller is an *institution*. He has an influence on old and young second to that of no man. He keeps posted on all the best books of the day, has a correct knowledge of best editions of standard authors, knows the tastes of all the readers and book-buyers for miles around, and has his customer in his mind's eye whenever he buys his books for stock or selects rare and out-of-the-way volume. The very titles of the books on his shelves are educating the young.

Such a man can correct a great many unfounded notions held by the community at large. He can make his customers understand that booksellers' profits are, and have always been, too small; that bookselling pays less than any other kind of business where the same amount of ability is employed; and that—to say nothing of the smaller average sales—the

percentage of profit is less than traders get on most other kinds of merchandise. When his townsmen fully understand this, and begin to appreciate the value of a first-class retail bookstore, most of them will be ready to buy their books at home, and pay a fair price for them.

A bookstore and bookseller like this will do a great deal to correct the misuse of public libraries. A free library rightly used is a great blessing to those who use it; and yet, though it contains only the best books, it may do a great deal of harm. Expensive reference books and very light reading find an appropriate place in a free library; but most books that are worth reading at all are worth reading more than once, and are worth owning. Such books, when taken from a circulating library, are read carelessly, and there is a double loss to the reader—he acquires a habit of reading carelessly what ought always to be closely studied, and he loses all that he ought to have gained by reading those very books.

When first-rate books are always to be seen on the bookstore shelves, people who love to read, even when they are poor, will economize in order to own a few volumes, and when one has a few books of his own and reads them, he is almost sure to buy more: it soon becomes a habit.

If you persuade a man to buy a book which he did not know he wanted, and he finds out, afterwards that it is just what he wanted, he will remember it as a great favor, and you have secured a customer. If all retail dealers would make a study of their business, as some of them do, fifty thousand copies instead of five or ten thousand would be a fair sale for a good book in this land of over forty millions of people, most of whom are readers.

Just as the local booksellers should have the most to do in making books sell, so, in the opinion of your Committee, this parent Association, composed of members from every part of our broad country, with different surroundings and different individual interests, can reasonably make only general rules, or lay down general laws for the guidance of what is not within their control, and over which they have no legal power.

The local associations must do the work of carrying out in detail the general rules adopted by your Association. And your Committee would urge upon every bookseller to join his local association, and to co-operate with the other dealers in his own section of country.

We congratulate the trade that so many local organizations already exist. A report of the committee on these organizations, appointed by the last Convention, will give you full details.

But, however much associations may do towards making the book trade healthier and steadier, we must not expect impossible things of them. In unchangeableness the laws of the Medes and Persians were not a "circumstance" to the laws of trade. The Medes and Persians are past and gone, but the laws of trade are the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, so long as commercial transactions are carried on. We should never forget, therefore, that these laws govern bookselling as they govern every other kind of traffic.

It may appear at first sight that, as publishers in most cases are protected in their publications by the law of copyright, bookselling is a kind of monopoly, and is not subject to the laws that

ordinarily govern in matters of trade. But monopolies do not quite escape the laws of trade; and copyrights are far from constituting any class of books a monopoly. One book can be made so much like another in most cases, that nearly all copyright books have to be put into the market on a competition basis.

The question, therefore, becomes a practical one, how far the prices of books are necessarily controlled by competition, and how far they can be governed by custom.

Books are among the few classes of merchandise that have a retail price fixed by the manufacturer, and, as a rule, a book if sold at this price would yield to the retailer no more than a fair living profit. But it is a rare thing for a commodity to be sold at the same price in all parts of a vast country like ours, where the cost of transportation must vary so largely, and where such different circumstances exist. It would be very difficult, even if we had laws to aid us, and a power behind the laws to enforce them, for this Association to bring about this state of things.

In ordinary times we should find that where the cost of books is least, there would be a great temptation to sell them at lower prices; as times are now, the temptations are infinitely greater.

This Association will have the observation and experience of the last two years to guide it in the action it may see fit to take on the twenty per cent rule, or on any substitute for or modification of that rule.

You may decide that twenty per cent, or even a less percentage, of the retail price of a book is a sufficiently extended scale of variation in price for all retail competition, and for all differences of latitude and longitude. And certainly, if it is simply a question of a fair profit, this scale of variation is *too much*.

But we have to ask now, not what ought to be, but what must be. We know what the temptations and necessities of the times are, and no one can foresee with any degree of certainty when there is to be a permanent change for the better. In every kind of business we see profits reduced almost to zero; in many cases to a great deal less than zero. We see a continual sifting going on in nearly all branches of trade. One by one men drop out, and steadily, though slowly, men who have a trade are taking up with some handicraft or with agriculture.

It would not be reasonable for us to hope that the book trade will escape this sifting process. Of first-rate retail booksellers, men who *make* their sales and increase the trade in books, there have not been, nor will there ever be, too many. But of all sorts, which embrace that large class of untrained booksellers, there are probably more now than can continue to live by the business, reduced in its dimensions and its profits as it is at present.

But as this sifting process goes on, it will be strange if many do not attempt to hold their ground by selling books at the lowest possible prices; it will be remarkable if a large part of the books sold is not a subject of the closest competition. Then, too, the prices of old books, "dead stock," and a certain class of imported books, will always have a tendency to affect the prices of new books. Perhaps something like this is true of other sorts of goods, but rarely to the extent that it is true of books.

A man intends to buy the Life and Letters of Macaulay, but in looking over a lot of *passé* books that are offered cheap, he pays out all his money, and so does not buy his Macaulay.

A reading man will frequently buy a book that he does not care much about, but which he thinks he may want some time, provided the book is cheap; but he will put off the purchase of another book that he does want if he thinks the price is a little too high: it is a slight thing that decides him.

Thus a large amount of old books and so-called "dead books," offered at low prices, will always manifest their influence upon the sale of new publications. And we all know what a vast amount of this kind of stock there is in this country to-day, slumbering on our shelves.

It may not be worth our while to pursue this subject farther at present, but whatever action the association may take on the subject of prices and discounts, it will perhaps be wise for us not to leave out of our calculations any of these disturbing influences. Your Committee would say that they have not lost faith in the book trade, or in this Association and the reform movement. The Association would be worth all its costs if its object were merely to enable the booksellers of the whole country to unite and compare notes once a year. The trade, we believe, has a great, a magnificent future before it—nay, it is, we believe, but in its infancy, and now, while the times are hard, we can at least lay the foundation of future prosperity.

If some stern facts stare us in the face, let us still continue to hope for the best, and believe with the astute Frenchman that "There is nothing so deceptive as facts except figures;" but let us also believe that in all the growths of loftier sentiment and higher morality our trade is to share.

For the Executive Committee,

WILLIAM LEE,
Chairman.

Religious Publication Societies.

For the Committee on Religious Publication Societies Mr. Simmons read the following report:

NEW YORK, July 10, 1876.

To the American Book-Trade Association: The Committee on Religious Societies would report that, after their appointment, upon looking over the ground, they found that with one or two exceptions the religious publishing societies were among the very first to adopt the reform, and to make the rules of this Association the rule of their business. In one instance where this was not done, a personal interview by the chairman brought out the fact that no notification or invitation had been sent, and upon the matter being placed before the business manager properly, the necessary orders were at once given. Your Committee are happy to believe that, as a rule, the publishing societies have adhered as rigidly to the rules of this Association as any class of dealers in the whole trade.

In regard to the future, your Committee can not help believing that any careful, conservative, well-considered action of this body will doubtless meet the hearty approval and co-operation of this entire branch of the trade.

Every religious publishing society, so far as the chairman knows, conducts its business upon the well-approved plan of other houses—

namely, making the profits pay its expenses—and if this is not done the same inevitable result must follow in their case as of any private publisher. I am certain none of them wish any longer to try the experiment of the last few years, that has been so thoroughly tested, of selling goods at *less* than cost and expecting to pay a hundred cents on the dollar, and expenses.

Respectfully submitted,

H. E. SIMMONS,
Chairman, etc.

THE PRESIDENT.—Now, gentlemen, if you have any doubt as to whether we have made any progress, I think you have some evidence in this report. I know it is very common in these days to say that religion don't amount to very much, but religion has kept the twenty per cent rule. [*Applause.*] Is the Committee on Local Organizations ready to report, Mr. Cushing, of Baltimore, chairman?

Mr. Cushing asked permission to have the report first submitted to the Committee of Thirty, stating that he had sent out two hundred and fifty circulars to members of the trade asking suggestions, but had been unable to submit his report to his committee. It was for this reason he would like to have it first referred to the Committee of Thirty, to have it partially discussed, so that the report finally may come before the Convention with the indorsement of at least a larger number than in the present case, there being but two members of the Committee on Local Organizations here. He added also a request that, as there was much business already referred to the Committee of Thirty, it would meet immediately after the session of the Convention in this place, which was preferable to the open lobby at the Belmont Hotel, where it was obliged to hold its meeting last evening. The proposed arrangements were made, and the Finance Committee was called upon to report.

Finance Committee.

Mr. Bowen, the chairman, said that he would simply make a statement, leaving the Treasurer to make a detailed report of the finances of the Association. The last report of the Treasurer showed our Association in a very healthful financial condition. We had money enough to pay our expenses, and a little surplus to defray the necessary expenses of the next meeting. We did not anticipate finding it necessary to call for additional funds. At the close of the session, however, when it was too late to make any provision for raising funds, the Association gave authority to the Executive Committee to employ a Secretary at an expense of six hundred dollars per annum. As might be expected, the treasury was very soon emptied, and a call made upon the Finance Committee for more funds. By the constitution, the Committee had the right to assess three dollars per member, which would have amounted to three or four hundred dollars; but as a large number of members had just joined, it was thought, after correspondence with members of the Committee, that it would not be advisable to make the assessment; that it might do more harm than good; and it was finally decided to prepare a letter for Mr. Monachesi, authorizing him to ask advances from some of the wealthy members of the Association.

THE PRESIDENT.—Will you name some of them, if you please? [*Laughter.*]

MR. BOWEN.—The Treasurer, Mr. Nicholson, will name them in his report. The advances were made, and the Association has gone on to the present hour without being out of funds. Regarding these funds, I would say they have been advances by those belonging to the Association. It will be understood, however, that the Association owes this money: it was not a contribution, it was an advance.

THE PRESIDENT.—Without collateral. [*Laughter.*]

MR. BOWEN.—It will be seen that if each member pays two dollars, we shall have money enough to pay these advances, leaving the treasury empty. The question now is, What shall we do for the coming year? If we employ a secretary as heretofore, we can not get along unless each member pay five dollars. There is, however, another way, which has been very successful with this Association: I remember one time that we were some five or six hundred dollars behindhand, and the liberal members of the Association paid it without seeming to know it. We have thought it desirable to ask, or to leave it to the Convention, whether it

would not be the better way, instead of increasing the membership fee to five dollars, to take up contributions and thus raise whatever money may be necessary to defray these additional expenses—that is, the expenses connected with the employment of a secretary. The Committee think it would be desirable, if it could be successful; and they are willing that the experiment should be tried. The Treasurer will suggest the method, probably by calling the roll and asking contributions, or he may ask privately how much each one will subscribe in order to raise this money without an additional drain on the Association. The Treasurer, as I say, will make a detailed report of the financial condition, and then the Convention will be prepared to act accordingly.

THE PRESIDENT.—I have great pleasure in introducing to you the Treasurer of the Association, Mr. Timothy Nicholson, of Richmond, Indiana.

On motion of Mr. Bowen, the recommendation of the Finance Committee was referred to the Committee of Thirty.

Mr. Nicholson read the following report :

TREASURER'S REPORT.

T. NICHOLSON, *Treasurer.*

IN ACCOUNT WITH A.B.T. ASSOCIATION.

[illegible]

LIABILITIES.

Money advanced by sundry firms.....	\$425 00
S. W. Green's bill for stationery.....	31 37
	<hr/>
Less cash on hand.....	\$456 37
	118 34
	<hr/>
Indebtedness.....	\$338 03

The undersigned having examined the above, and compared it with the vouchers, find it correct.

SILAS T. BOWEN,

SILAS T. BOWEN,
CHAS. HUMPHREY.

PHILADELPHIA, July 13th, 1876.

Local Reports.

THE PRESIDENT.—Now, I think it exceedingly desirable that we should get some statements, not only as to the state of trade in various localities, but as to the operations of the rules of the Association. The best way to get at that is through the statements of the gentlemen connected with various local organizations, and first in order I would call on Alfred C. Barnes,

of New York, the President of the Central Booksellers' Association.

NEW YORK.

Mr. Barnes said :

Mr. President and fellow-tradesmen : The attitude of the Central Association during the year that is just past has been one of quiet contemplation. I would like to call it a

masterly inactivity if I dared, but I fear it would hardly bear the name. We have in a quiet way rested upon the laurels won prior to the termination of the exciting campaign of the previous year, which terminated with our report at Niagara, enjoying the advantages secured at that time, and not too much encouraged by circumstances to grasp for more. I suppose we ought to be ashamed, and it is a mortifying thing to confess, that we have not made greater progress; but the truth must be told and its applications made, or else we shall never experience a revival. We have noticed, too, that the apathy is not confined to New York; it seems to have spread far and wide, as though some power hostile to the book trade had woven a subtle spell and cast it over the whole brotherhood. With so many equal sinners, then, we are not so much abashed as we ought to be, in view of the state of facts. As to the philosophy of the thing, we do not attribute this condition, as your Executive Committee's report has prepared you for believing, to any weakening of faith or of purpose to maintain the eternal principles, founded on truth, equity, and justice, that have been heretofore evolved. On the contrary, let any man of us sniff the slightest disrespect for our great and glorious constitution, and he is on his feet, with his weapons in his hands and vengeance in his eye in an instant. But I am sorry to say, he is very apt to go to sleep again before he pierces the offender. I am led to use this allegory in view of the lame and impotent conclusions of several committees, sent out from the Central Booksellers' Association. Although they went forth breathing threatenings and slaughter, some of those men I have never seen again. Unless their valor failed them—a thought which should perish before it was uttered—their bones to-day lie bleaching before the caves of our two local ogres, one on Beekman street, and one on Fourteenth street. [Applause.] Poor fellows! They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, but they did not get up steam enough to carry them to the end which they sought.

THE PRESIDENT.—Were they divided in death?

MR. BARNES.—I don't know, I am sure. They may all be in one place. I suppose we may consider this their obituary notice, unless we shall succeed in galvanizing them to a better purpose hereafter.

The Central Association is now practically, as to details, an affair of New York alone. Three stalwart branches have grown out on either hand. The offshoot at Boston has grappled vigorously, I believe, with the ferocious book-butcher and given him many a fall; and the trade in Baltimore have organized successfully under my accomplished friend, Mr. Cushing. But our youngest, our Benjamin we may call him, the young Hercules of Philadelphia, is our joy and our pride at the time of the present speaking. [Applause.] You will remember that he was a Prodigal; but ever since he fell upon his father's bosom at Niagara [laughter] his life has been indeed an exemplary one. For probity and usefulness and efficiency few can compare with him. The very atmosphere he breathes, I believe, is fatal to the underseller, because we have never heard of one since. They seem to dry up and blow away before the pure influence. And have you noticed the prodigious jewel worn upon his bosom? It is the

princely house of Lippincott. All honor to the brave and true! I have no right, of course, to anticipate the report of our hosts, but I can not refrain from paying them this passing compliment, as we claim a part of the credit, in default of much of our own, for what they have accomplished since setting up housekeeping for themselves.

But you will naturally ask me to give you something, as the watchman in our particular latitude, of the progress of the night, as observed from New York. Well, traveller, the day is breaking; but I think it is the slowest dawn I ever saw. [Laughter.] The car of Phœbus lingers long beneath the horizon. It does not recede, that is one comfort; and some enthusiastic reformer, flapping his wings on an ideal roost, cheers us by an occasional crow. But the powers of darkness, I regret to say, laugh both him and us to scorn. Though unable to drive back the glowing orb they still deprive us of the full effulgence of his shining face. Who are the powers that wield such a baneful influence? They are of the great family of ogres who have baffled our bravest and best, as heretofore narrated. And, strange to say, these obstacles to progress are themselves of insignificant strength, but, like the giants in the Pilgrim's Progress, they sit idly in their dens, but mutter incantations to mightier wizards than themselves; and these wizards are not, like themselves, malicious, but only indifferent, and from sheer good-nature lend themselves to purposes of mischief.

And right here, Mr. President, I must drop metaphor and distinctly arraign my own class of the trade. Gentlemen publishers—those who are present, and those who are absent, if my word shall reach them—you are responsible for the present halt in the reform. These brave men have toiled and overcome; they have accomplished all that could be done by earnest shoulder-to-shoulder effort among themselves. You have looked on with indulgence and even with approval; you have yourselves conformed to the rules of the Association as applying to your own trade, and you have praised their wisdom and their equity; but all the while you have been deliberately supplying ammunition to the cruel underseller, who is practically on the same footing with the regular trade in your accounts. You say that other publishers, or that the jobbers, would supply them if you did not, and that the money of the underseller is as good as any other. Now these are specious arguments, but they are by no means conclusive. I venture to say that the publishers will all agree to cut off the undersellers if you who now hold back will take the lead. But even if they do not, you will win a dozen active friends at every point where your magnanimity becomes known and its beneficial influence is felt, who will carry your list to greater success than the influence of all the booksellers in the place, or the baleful influence of the bookselling Ishmaelite alone can possibly offer you. The jobbers can be no possible obstacle, because they are willing to comply with the expressed wishes of the publisher, with regard to the disposition of his stock. No class has shown more willingness than the jobbers to co-operate with every practical measure of the reform, and the manager of the leading jobbing house in the country has repeatedly assured me that they would

comply in the minutest particular with any reasonable request which might be made by the publisher about the disposition of his books; and that includes all requests likely to be made or which this Convention would indorse. The apprehension lest you might not be able to follow your stock through several hands, and thereby prevent it from reaching the sinner at last, is unfounded. The publisher's arm is long, and I defy any dealer to obtain a sufficient stock to carry on business if the publisher is determined he shall not have it. [Applause.]

The proposition that the underseller's money, being as good as any other, entitles him to the indulgence which he receives, I stoutly oppose. In the first place, it is questionable whether you ever get that money [laughter], and, on the other hand, whether he will not drag down with him two or three more honest dealers, and so leave the publisher trebly desolate. Then consider the morality of it. Can we, as publishers—because I am not putting myself outside my own class now, but I can say we are willing to do what I now suggest for my own house [loud applause]—can we afford to make our trade-list a moral falsehood, for the sake of thirty pieces of silver? [Applause.] "Has good faith a price?" is the question which the publisher should ask himself.

Finally, the right to impose terms upon sales, affecting the subsequent disposition of stock, is just as clear as that of the druggist who declines to fill a prescription of strychnine for a would-be suicide, or a railroad company which issues excursion tickets which shall be good only on the day of issue. Therefore there is nothing wanting, it seems to me, but the consent of the publishers to set the key-stone in this arch that has been so laboriously constructed, at the present stage of this movement. I would rather have the signatures of twenty publishers in these large cities to a guarantee of protection, than those of ten thousand booksellers throughout the country to an agreement to co-operate simply. [Applause.] Only let the publishers promise that the moment an underseller is bulletined as such by the Arbitration Committee they will cut him off, and the reform from that day is an accomplished fact. [Applause.] I do wish that the publishers might awaken to a full sense of their responsibility in this matter. And in this connection I greatly regret to see that some of the great houses are not represented here. It seems a pity, when so much has been accomplished, that all should fail from want of a little practical sympathy and effort where the trade have a good right to expect it.

Our present situation reminds me of a dramatic episode in the march of Xenophon's ten thousand, as narrated in the Anabasis. After perils and hardships innumerable, we have come to a height whence like those heroes we joyfully shout "Thalassa! Thalassa!" and plunge towards the sea. But lo! an unexpected obstacle! Though liberty is in sight and almost within reach, the whole shores are lined with the battlemented cities of publishers, whose sentinels cry "No thoroughfare!" to the throng before their gates. [Applause.] No one disputes that this is the clear right of neutrals, but, gentlemen publishers, the trade calls upon you to choose the nobler part and to declare yourselves full allies, ready and willing to give succor and deliverance to these grateful pilgrims,

who will in turn carry your banners, with their own, to victory in many a new campaign. I might add a dozen selfish considerations to influence you, but I will not pay such slight honor to my own class. I am proud to belong to a body of men who act on principle. They will do this thing because it is right, because it is generous, and because it will add fresh lustre to the honorable name of an American publisher! [Great applause.]

THE PRESIDENT.—I have a few letters which I want to read in the absence of our Secretary. The first has for its heading the name of a house than which there is none more honorable in all the land—the house of Little, Brown & Co., of Boston. [Applause.] These letters are addressed to the President, in answer to special invitations sent to the senior members of these various firms:

AUGUSTUS FLAGG.

BOSTON, June 26, 1876.

A. D. F. RANDOLPH, Esq., *President A. B. T. A.*:

DEAR SIR: I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your kind letter of the 20th inst., and the flattering assurance that my presence at the approaching Philadelphia Convention is desired by the members of the trade. While I fully appreciate the compliment, I find myself obliged to decline the invitation. For many years I have virtually withdrawn from active intercourse with the members of the trade, and should despair of being able to add anything to the wisdom of their counsels. But while I can not personally co-operate with you in your efforts towards reform, I assure you of my hearty sympathy and good wishes, so far as your enterprise promises practical improvement in the trade. That it is well intended, I can not doubt; but the experience of the past year does not justify expectations of its full success.

Let me add that, in my opinion, our firm has fallen behind no others in this effort to maintain a uniformity in the prices of books, even to our detriment.

Yours very truly,

AUGUSTUS FLAGG.

ROBERT CLARKE.

CINCINNATI, June 22, 1876.

MY DEAR RANDOLPH: I have just received the special invitation of your committee for the Convention meeting of 11th prox.

I regret very much that it will not be in my power to be present on that occasion, much as I would like to meet you all there and take what little part I could in your proceedings. It will be an important meeting, and I hope will be a large and harmonious one, and wisely settle whatever vexed questions may be brought before it.

My partner, Mr. Alexander Hill, will represent our firm.

I have not been east for eleven years, but hope to break away about the 1st September, and renew my personal acquaintance with my friends in the trade in Philadelphia, New York, and Boston.

Wishing you a very successful meeting, I remain

Yours very truly,

ROBERT CLARKE.

THE PRESIDENT.—Now, gentlemen, here is a letter from one whom many of you perhaps

have never seen—a man who for forty years has pursued the even tenor of his way; against whom there has never been entered a complaint of unfair dealing; a man who has reaped substantial fruits of his labor, who, while he has never come much into personal contact with you, has never lost his interest in this business, and who is one of the best supporters of this reform.

ROBERT CARTER.

NEW-YORK, June 22, 1876.

A. D. F. RANDOLPH, Esq.:

DEAR SIR: Your kind invitation to the Booksellers' Meeting was received last night. I am sorry that I can not accept it, as I am going with my family to Massachusetts on Tuesday next, to stay for the summer months.

It has been a great pleasure to me—superannuated as I am—to see the manly effort you and your fellow-workers are making to remedy the evils that afflict the *Book Trade*. May you have great success in a work that requires much wisdom.

Yours affectionately,

ROBERT CARTER.

THE PRESIDENT.—A few weeks ago, gentlemen, it was my pleasure to spend an hour or two with one of the magnates of our trade; one who for the last year has retired substantially from active life. I sat upon the porch of his house in one of those beautiful towns on our noble Hudson, looking off for miles around upon a scene of surpassing loveliness and beauty. He sat upon the porch, the very figure of a veteran taking his repose after years of manly, honest toil. This letter is from him:

FLETCHER HARPER.

IRVINGTON, June 23, 1876.

A. D. F. RANDOLPH, Esq., *President A. B. T. A.*:

MY DEAR SIR: I am very much touched with your kind remembrance of an old fellow like me, but, as you know, I am too great an invalid, just now, to incur the excitement of accepting your invitation to be personally present at the Convention of the 11th of July, of the trade.

I have referred your invitation to our house, and hope that some of them will accept it.

Yours faithfully,

FLETCHER HARPER.

THE PRESIDENT.—Now, gentlemen, we have a few more letters, but we will vary the exercises, and would like to hear from Mr. Hammett, of the Committee of the New England Booksellers' Association.

NEW ENGLAND.

Mr. Hammett said:

Mr. President and gentlemen of the Association: It would seem too bad to report any thing but success of our organization, and of the plans made by such an honorable body of men, such a good-looking body of men, such a wise body of men, as the booksellers of the United States. I have been thinking what I could say in the way of the success, if I should be called upon, of this movement in New England. I can say this much, that there are some of us that have thought its principles so true and so good to live by that they would be good enough to die by; and in keeping them we have almost died, during the year that is past. The 20 per cent rule and the rules of the As-

sociation, as we have adopted them in our Association, have been a success to me in this respect. They have enabled me to keep on my shelves the books that I bought last fall for the purpose of selling to make something on, and that success has been worth something to me this summer; because it has kept my men busy every day with their dusters, going over them and keeping them in shape for next fall's trade. So Satan has found no mischief for idle hands to do. [*Laughter and applause.*]

It has been a success with us in some other respects. When we come to the matter of Public Libraries, which was referred to yesterday, as the all-consuming market apparently for our goods, we found last fall there were a few libraries that came around to us and asked the prices of books, and that kept us busy in marking up their lists, and in showing they could have the books at 20 per cent off. It found business for our clerks who would otherwise have been idle. Every man in Boston had the privilege of marking on the same list, and that made a good deal of work for all of them. They went all around and found they couldn't do any better, and some of them purchased; and the circulating libraries did the same. And we thought we were going to have a nice time, selling to libraries at 20 per cent off. But soon they found a man in New York who would sell them all they wanted at one third off, and they went back on us. But some of those men are getting rich by selling goods at cost or less than cost—a paradox which I have never been able to explain or figure on my profit-and-loss sheet.

It has been a success in another direction. Last week a teacher in a town a few miles from New Bedford wrote to me, saying that he wanted to use a few of my friend Eldredge's books, among them Chase & Stuart's *First Six Books in Virgil*, list price \$1.25; and said he, "I sent to New Bedford for them and they charged me ninety-five cents a piece; I think I paid too much; I ought to have bought them from you. What could I have them from you for?" I wrote him back, "For one dollar;" and I have lost his trade, which will go to New Bedford hereafter.

Now it seems to me, gentlemen, that as a general thing there are a few of us who are standing between two fires. There seem to be some good, honorable publishers among the heaviest publishers in the country on the one hand, and a class of retailers on the other. These retailers can get all the stock they wish, and they can undersell the jobbers at from five to ten per cent, and we hold our goods.

One thing more and I am done. At the last meeting of the New England Booksellers' Association the charge was made that the Arbitration Committee had ceased to do its duty; that complaint after complaint had been handed in and no attention had been paid to them. This fired the Arbitration Committee anew, and we thought we would get a new lease of our lives by doing something before this Convention. We sent out invitations for complaints. We got in a few. We called a meeting, and we had a meeting at the building where two members of the Arbitration Committee had their office, so as to be sure that we could have a quorum of three present. The cases were brought before us. "Words and their Uses" had been sold by this underseller

for \$1.50; "Smith's Bible Dictionary" had been sold for \$18, and other books in the same proportion. We passed resolutions that that man was an underseller. We went farther. A majority of those present thought best, as he had had an invitation to be present and answer and had refused to comply with that request—a majority of the Committee thought best to notify all of the trade not to sell that underseller any more books, and also requested me to write to the Chairman of the Arbitration Committee of the Central Association asking him to do the same thing in New York and Philadelphia. But on consultation with some of the warmest friends of this twenty per cent rule and with some of the leading members of this Association, they said the moment we should do that we should be complained of for libel, and nothing but a case in court and a long suit and damages would be the result, and we must handle the parties tenderly. Well, as I was not very fond of courting—in that way—and as the profits of the last year's sales had not been sufficient to pay high damages, I concluded to take the advice of those gentlemen and have an interview with this underseller. Last Monday night he and I came on the Fall River line together. For two blessed hours we consulted together, and that man said that by two hours' swearing in his store he could get all his clerks instructed so that none of them would sell at more than twenty per cent off; so that hereafter I think you will find Boston the paradise of booksellers, and you will not hear of any books being sold for more than twenty per cent off. [Applause.]

CINCINNATI.

THE PRESIDENT.—Now, gentlemen, you can't have a good picture without lights and shadows. Having had considerable shadow for a little while, I would like to call upon Mr. Hill, of Robert Clarke & Co., of Cincinnati, to give us a little light and pleasant coloring, as shall show us the working of the reform movement in that city. [Applause.]

Mr. Hill said his statement would be but a brief one; that they had local organization, and that there was a perfect unanimity of feeling in the trade on the question of the twenty per cent rule—that is, those engaged in the disposition of miscellaneous books—and that books have been sold in no case at a greater discount than twenty per cent; that there was a circular issued stating that no discount could be given better than ten per cent, and in some cases twenty per cent; that they had found that to work very admirably; that most of the trade had come directly to them, and they had tried to do every thing they could to encourage the local bookseller.

THE PRESIDENT.—I would like to ask Mr. Hill in regard to the operation of the rule as to the public libraries, what has been their experience in Cincinnati; whether they have lost all their library trade, or whether they have been able to sell to public libraries for the last three years?

MR. HILL.—We have sold them right along, on an understanding with the booksellers that that discount was given, and the trade has strictly adhered to that discount.

A member stated that as Mr. Cushing, of Baltimore, was present, the Convention would be glad to hear from him.

BALTIMORE.

Mr. Cushing said:

Ours is a very short story to tell. We are like men that are about to get into a sea of trouble. All of our trade belong to the local association, and all keep its rules, except one. That one has been duly posted on the bulletin-board of the Arbitration Committee. The bulletin has never left the committee as yet, therefore we can't tell what they are going to do about it. We do want one other element to make us feel that the reform is all that it should be, and Mr. Barnes struck the key-note of it in his address to you this morning. [Applause.]

One of the members of our local association read to the Committee of Thirty a statement showing how necessary that thing is, and that while the publishers of the United States hold their best terms in almost every case to be a discount of 40 per cent, and while they claim that that is given only on the introduction of books to school boards, I announce to the Convention that books furnished to the city schools of the city of Baltimore were furnished at a discount all through of 42 per cent. Now, gentlemen, walking through high grass and feeling a sharp sting, we say there must be a snake; and it would be natural to say that the man that can sell at 42 per cent discount and make money, must be aided by somebody who is breaking the rules of the Publishers' Board of Trade. We can not believe that any publishers would do that; but it stands to-day that the school board of Baltimore can be supplied at 42 per cent discount, and school boards at other places can be supplied at 50 per cent, with the books of two of the leading publishers. The sale has been offered to school boards of the counties of the State of Maryland at 50 off, and the contracts given and money made.

Now, the anomaly that the gentleman of Boston spoke of as a paradox is most strange: that men can sell their books at a price less than the publisher will assure you, on his honor, face to face, he has ever sold them; and that all the profit of the trade goes to the men who sell below what they pay. This is no reason for going back on the rule which you make. And the other side of the paradox is that the man who sells at a discount of 20 for a short period can hardly raise money enough to come to this Convention, with all the liberal terms afforded. The paradox is proper to solve, and it comes that after three years' work you have got to decide what there is in the book trade that in it there is an element that exists in no other business; that the only way to be prosperous is to dispose of your goods at a large percentage below what they cost you. [Laughter.]

And there is another question which this Convention should straightway think of—how far its publishers or its jobbers can afford to sell to people who persistently sell for less, for a greater discount than they can get off; and how long it would be, on that principle, before the whole country is strewn with the wrecks of booksellers, and the strongest publishers may begin to feel that there comes to be a drain upon their resources that may put them on that awful list that the agencies send round. This question, gentlemen, I

don't wish to bring before you before its time, because the Committee of Thirty will undoubtedly bring it before you, and from all parts of the country it will come up before you, and the mode of dealing with it and what remedy shall be established must rest with you. But our association asks you how it can happen. Somewhere among you all, publishers and booksellers together, there should be a possibility of establishing some legitimate principle in the trade, or else we then come down to do what has always been profitable in the book trade: to take a single book under your arm, with all that for your stock, and no more, put on a light coat with two ample pockets, and a placard on your back, if you please, "Orders taken at 40 off for this valuable publication." [Applause.] This will not tempt into the book trade men of culture and character; it may tempt to the book trade men without character or integrity.

But, to leave the gloomy picture, in the retailing of books we have found the rule work generally very successfully. We have found that among the general public buyers are thoroughly satisfied so long as they believe that, according to the amount of their purchases, and according to their professional qualifications, under the rules, they are doing as well at home as they can do elsewhere. That is all they ask. The teacher is not satisfied usually if he finds another man who sells him at 30 and I sell him at only 20; but if he knows that at Philadelphia or New York the teacher gets only 20, he is perfectly contented to buy at home. And so it is with libraries. They are perfectly contented to buy at home if they once feel assured that they can do as well at home as they can by going elsewhere. And now, gentlemen, ever on this revolving globe we come again to that one spot, New York. From wherever you start, wherever you go in the universe, for any thing especially good or bad, it seems you must travel back to New York. There is an awful rumor that in New York libraries are getting 30 and 33 per cent off. It comes without a name—a rumor that some of the high and reputable houses in the trade had offered books to libraries for more than 20 per cent. I had a conversation with a party who said he had been offered books for more than 20 per cent discount by the leading houses in New York. "I want to know two things," I said. "Do you call the men that offered you this reputable houses of the trade?" "Yes," was the reply. I gave, as a test, only two, whom I had no belief would have broken the agreement, whom I had the firmest confidence would stand straight out, and it was worth losing the sale of a library to know that the two great houses on which I had relied, and about whom I had asked, were free from the aspersion of having sold their commercial honor. I said, "Did Scribner, Welford & Armstrong, or Harper & Brothers, give you any better offer than 20 per cent off?" "No!" [Great applause.]

Gentlemen, I want to say that among men generally, take them as they run, through the world, the price of their honor is moderately high. But according to all the statements we hear in regard to a select body of men—I mean of certain members selected, whose names we do not know—it must be admitted that the price of a bookseller's honor is sometimes as low as

ten cents, for that is the price at which they sell themselves, in the reports, on single books. [Laughter.] Ought this not to be an incredible thing? You can't buy a professional thief for ten cents. It is derogatory to the profession. [Laughter.]

THE PRESIDENT.—The price is too low.

MR. CUSHING.—The price is too low; there are some things for which a small amount of money does not pay. Certainly there ought to be a feeling among the bookselling profession that if there be any class of men—if there be one class of merchants who should stand pre-eminently above all others in the community, whose word should be as good as their bond, and whose obligation, once entered into, should never be broken, it should be a select class of men like you. There is not a man here, as I look around on this assembly, in whose face I can read so mean a trait as of selling his mercantile honor for so low and petty a price. [Great applause.]

THE PRESIDENT.—Mr. Ingham, of Cleveland, asks the gentleman from Baltimore whether the twenty per cent rule in its application to the professional classes is kept in Baltimore. I understood Mr. Cushing to say it was strictly kept.

At our Convention at Put-in-Bay, and also at Niagara, although the house was ably represented by one of its junior members, we did not have the pleasure of meeting the senior of the firm of Scribner, Armstrong & Co. Mr. Armstrong is with us to-day, and I would like to have him say a few words to you.

MR. ARMSTRONG'S REMARKS.

Mr. Armstrong said:

I am very glad to meet you all here. I have been so much interested with a French official here that I have omitted hearing much that has been going on. As many of you know, I am not directly engaged in the process of selling books, being so much occupied with the general supervision of our business, though of course I do know however about our experience in this reform. And I am very glad to say to you that we feel we have been very greatly benefited by it, although we have had many come to us at times complaining of this, that, or the other house, and we have no doubt there is that complaint of us. All that I can say is, we are in sympathy with you, and want to do every thing we can do in this reform.

But while I am here I might say that what in my own mind has been most prominent since you have commenced this reform, is the fact that the discounts are too great with all in our trade. We humbug ourselves by the large discounts that the publishers have felt themselves forced to make, and thereby we have been forced to increase the retail prices of our books. Now, gentlemen, it seems to me, from the little that I know about this matter, the most important thing we can do is to reduce both the retail prices and discounts. [Applause.] Then the matter of reform will have a practical issue. And while I know that the jobber must have his profit, and the retailer his, so also must the publisher have his profit; and I am sure that the publisher will join with me in saying that our profits are less than they ever have been, although the prices seem to be too high to the public. Now let us make

up our minds to make our retail prices lower, make our discounts less, stick to them through and through, no matter what amount of books is bought, and you will soon find that the reform will have more effect and more power than by any other means. I simply give this as my personal experience, and would be glad to hear the experience of other publishers, as well as booksellers. I know as publishers we can't get along without the retailing booksellers, and we must work for them and through them. We depend upon the regular sale of the books we publish, and we depend upon you to help us to sell; and to do so we must be in sympathy with you, and we want do all we can to help you. And we intend to do it. [*Applause.*]

Mr. Barnes begged to append to his report two resolutions from the Central Booksellers' Association; one of these was incorrectly given at first, and will be found correctly given below, by Mr. Dodd. The other suggested to the Convention a recommendation to the publishers to reduce prices and discounts. [The resolution itself could not be found.—R. B. K., Stenographer.]

THE PRESIDENT.—Now, gentlemen, we have had very abundant evidence since we have been together that this was a good place to hold our convention. The Committees of Arrangements and of Reception have shown very great kindness to us in many respects. In addition to that you have been permitted to walk through the halls of the great Exposition. We have also been permitted to meet some of the members of our trade prosecuting their great vocation in foreign lands—our German and our French friends. And we have with us this morning the representative of one of the most distinguished firms—Hachette & Co., of Paris—Mr. Fouret, whom I now wish to present to you. [*Loud and prolonged applause.*]

REMARKS OF MR. FOURET.

Gentlemen: I must first apologize for my very bad English. I am not accustomed to speak in public, and especially in your nice, good, and friendly language. But I think when I am among my brothers here that we shall very soon get acquainted with each other, and that we shall get along together very well. I am very much pleased, for my own part, to see here so nice and beautiful a meeting as this one, and I feel it to be a very good and excellent thing to have an opportunity of seeing nearly all the representatives of the branches of the publishing and bookselling business in America as I have seen here to-day. I must thank you for the kind reception that we all—French and other foreign commissioners—have had here, and I must thank you for the kind reception in admitting me to this meeting with you. [*Loud applause.*]

HUDSON RIVER CITIES.

The President then called for further local reports. Mr. Knight first spoke, for the Hudson River Association.

Mr. Knight said:

I regret very much that my partner, Mr. Nims, is not here to tell the story of our labors in Troy, or that our neighboring friend, Mr. Young, is not, although he is present and attending the Exhibition—I don't know but by some chance he may be in the room. If Mr. Young is here I should be

very glad to yield the floor to him. If not, however, I will as briefly as possible give you an account of our work in our locality. After the Niagara Convention, last year, I went home brimful of enthusiasm, as I always do after a meeting of this kind. We immediately got things in shape for forming a local association.

Before doing that, however, I was suddenly called away on a trip which took me from home six or eight weeks, going from Troy to New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, and thence West. I made it my business during that trip to make inquiries in regard to the working of the regulations of the Association, and found that certain methods had been started in Philadelphia and other cities, particularly Philadelphia, in regard to the question of discounts. Certain matters which we had deemed best to leave open and unsettled at the Niagara Convention, had been nicely adjusted in Philadelphia. I immediately wrote home to my partners that such was the case, and suggested the formation of a local organization, and that something of the kind be done, having the assurance of one or two houses in New York that something of the sort should be done there. The association was got into shape, and ratified a rather radical form of constitution. We drew the reins very close, designating what our powers were, and regulating discounts.

All went on swimmingly for a month or two. At the end of that time the holiday season began: we began to have our usual holiday rush of trade. But—pardon me—before I go on any farther I must give Mr. Nims credit for the great work he did in the organization of our association, and in making sentiment in our locality. The trade scarcely took a PUBLISHERS' WEEKLY, and knew nothing about the principles of the reform; so we had first to go to work to make sentiment, to get these people to join us. Finally we got things in motion. We got along swimmingly for about two months, when the selling out of large concerns and many of the smaller ones contributed largely towards effecting a failure of the rules. We soon learned that some of the associations had suspended the rules, and their prices had also been suspended. We have had considerable reason to complain about prices. We have been subject to as much annoyance as any other house. We have had under our noses two or three undersellers all the time.

Mr. Knight went on to state that an individual who went by the name of the "book-butcher," formerly of Albany, boldly advertised to sell books at twenty-five per cent off, and that he sold books at all sorts of discounts; that that, of course, was a little annoyance, and nothing but considerable faith and belief in the reform helped them to stick to it. Most of the members of the association thought that they couldn't stand the pressure and must have the privilege of meeting that kind of competition.

THE PRESIDENT.—What has become of the book-butcher?

MR. KNIGHT.—The book-butcher seems to thrive, but I think the Troy book-buyers have about exhausted the range of his stock.

THE PRESIDENT.—Is his credit good in New York?

MR. KNIGHT.—The book-butcher pays cash. To illustrate that question, let me tell you of one of his operations. He went to New York, to a large publishing house on Broadway—a house identified with this reform—and there made a selection of stock. Some of the stock was a little rough, and with it not a little new, fresh stock. After making the selection they asked him who he was. He gave his name. They knew that a person bearing that name was the "book-butcher," and they asked him if he was the "book-butcher." He said "Yes." "Very well," said they, "we can't sell you the books." But I am told that in less than an hour he had those books. He got somebody to go in there and buy them for him. It is very difficult to cut off such fellows as that.

THE PRESIDENT.—What proportion of the business of Troy was done by this man—of the regular, legitimate book business of Troy?

MR. KNIGHT.—I can not state.

THE PRESIDENT.—Can you form any conception?

MR. KNIGHT.—Perhaps a very small proportion of it was done by him. I can not say exactly, but I have my impression; and we had some very annoying instances in connection with the matter. My impression is that most of his customers are not regular book-buyers. Some other things that occurred I wish to speak of. I don't want to see every thing in this Convention rose-colored. People come here and spread a glamour over every thing done here, and every thing seems all right and serene at the Convention, and when we get home we find we have done nothing. I believe it was decided at the Niagara Convention that the principal of an academy or school was not considered a book-seller. Last fall one of the schools, not very far from our locality, that had long been accustomed to deal with us, was driven away on account of discounts. We endeavored to get it back, but they had found they could get discounts in New York from thirty to forty per cent. This was the more annoying because those houses were represented at the Niagara Convention.

THE PRESIDENT.—There is one point I want to ask Mr. Knight, because in almost every place there is some one who is an underseller. The question is—of course, this man in Troy is a great annoyance—but in a business point of view, and as a question of business sagacity, because that man happened to be located so as to transact business there—would it have paid you in order to meet him, at once to have sold at a greater discount than twenty per cent?

MR. KNIGHT.—I think not. I don't think we ever attempted any thing of that kind. But we did hope that the organization would be strong enough to cut off his supplies. But he snapped his fingers at our efforts to get him into the association, and said, "Money will buy books anywhere."

THE PRESIDENT.—Now, gentlemen, the Committee of Thirty will have a session on the adjournment of this meeting. We have no afternoon session; but before we adjourn, I want to hear from one or two gentlemen. I want to call on Mr. Simmons of New York, of the American Tract Society—if he is in the room—to give us a little of his experience.

MR. SIMMONS.

MR. SIMMONS.—I suppose that I stand here representing both classes, publisher as well as

retailer; for, as you know, we retail our own goods, besides being publishers. In looking over this matter, two or three years ago, we made up our mind to one thing: that we had got to decide whether we wanted the retailers with us or the book-butchers. The matter came up for direct decision, and we decided to take the retailers; and when a book-butcher tells you "Money will buy books anywhere," you can tell him he can't buy the books of the American Tract Society if he is an underseller. [Applause.] In regard to these jobbers in New York, I have to say that, with one exception, every one of them has come in. In one exception I was obliged to say distinctly, "If you supply certain individuals I will not sell to you, under any circumstances." The books of the American Tract Society are sold only at retail, and if you will show me one place where they are sold by undersellers, I will cut off their supplies. [Applause.]

MR. BARNES.—I have by no means referred to him in my reflections.

THE PRESIDENT.—I should like to hear from Mr. Black. I want to hear his experience.

MR. BLACK'S REMARKS.

MR. BLACK.—We have had no trouble to get the retail prices. We had a little difficulty, but the Committee settled that matter. The Committee has made several suggestions which will go before the Committee of Thirty, and I would rather have the whole matter discussed there, as we have had very little difficulty in getting good prices ourselves.

MR. DODD.—I should like to make an explanation as Secretary of the Central Booksellers' Association. The resolution which was read by Mr. Barnes was read by him from an incorrect copy of the resolution, and as I am partly responsible for that incorrect copy being put in his hands, I wish to say here that the resolution did not refer to underselling by the news companies, but did refer to the relations of the news companies and of other dealers to prominent undersellers, referring only to the fact that these undersellers received their supplies mainly from news companies and other wholesale dealers,—not the news companies alone. The American News Company is notoriously strict in the matter of retailing books. A prominent placard is on the walls stating that no books can be bought by any other than retailers at less than the retail price, and it is perfectly understood, and a well-known fact that this is observed.

The resolution, properly worded, is as follows:

Resolved, that this Association, through its President, request the Convention at Philadelphia to appoint a committee who shall investigate and report to the Convention, what action if any is necessary in regard to the reported underselling of News Companies and other prominent dealers throughout the country.

Committee on Nominations.

On motion of Mr. Lee, a committee of ten was appointed to make the nominations for the coming year. The following gentlemen were appointed as such committee:

A. C. Barnes,
B. H. Ticknor,
Timothy Nicholson,

Joseph M. Cushing,
J. A. Black,
I. E. Sheldon,
C. A. Clapp,
Wesley Jones,
H. H. West,
Charles T. Dillingham.

THE PRESIDENT.—I am requested by the gentlemen of the Philadelphia Committee to say that they have not received as rapidly as they desire, acceptances of the invitation for the excursion to Atlantic City. With that hospitality which characterizes Philadelphia, ample provision has been made for all the delegates to this Convention, with the ladies who have accompanied the delegates, to go on that excursion. But in order that the arrangements may be perfected at the earliest moment, the Committee request that you will send in your acceptance at once.

The Convention then adjourned.

Third Session—Thursday Morning.

At ten o'clock the Convention was called to order by the Vice-President, Wesley Jones, of Burlington, Iowa, in the indisposition of the President.

After the reading of the minutes, the Chair said: As the Committee of Thirty is not ready to report yet, we would like to hear from Mr. Roys, of Detroit. Mr. Roys is not a member of this Association, but he desires to make a statement here in regard to newspapers and newsdealers, if the Convention will lend him a few moments' attention.

REMARKS OF MR. ROYS.

Mr. Chairman and brethren: I thank you that I am permitted to speak here in this Convention, not being a member. And I thank you especially that I am permitted to speak here in this hall, erected and dedicated to even-handed justice regardless of fame or fortune. I thank you, too, that I am permitted to speak in this city, which has been Freedom's home for a century, and has been lately rebaptized and reconsecrated to truth and justice. This may be said to be the nation's birthplace and Liberty's home. And did you ever consider, Mr. President and gentlemen, how much we all need a home, and what that word home means?

The speaker was called to order as not speaking to the point, and, on vote, the call to order was sustained.

The Chair then called on Mr. Baird, of Philadelphia.

REMARKS OF MR. BAIRD.

Mr. Baird said: I rise to address this Convention under a profound sense of duty—duty to a profession with which my family has been connected for nearly a century, and myself less than a third of a century. There may be some things that I shall tell you that you won't want to hear. There may be things that I shall tell you that your preconceived opinions shall prevent you from believing. But that is no evidence of their not being true.

MR. WEST.—Mr. President, I rise to a point of order. It is impossible to do any thing but exist, and I suggest that we have the reports of

our committees, and after that, if there is any life left in us, we can hear these other matters.

The question was put to vote whether the Convention would hear Mr. Baird, of Philadelphia, further upon the subject, and the motion to permit him the floor was lost.

A VOICE :—Give us the reports.

Committee of Thirty.

MR. CUSHING.—Owing to the late hour when the Committee adjourned, the Committee of Thirty were not able to get all their papers in complete order, but they will make a report, of which the verbiage may perhaps be somewhat changed afterwards.

Mr. Cushing then offered as the report the following series of resolutions:

Resolved, 1st. That the number of members of the Arbitration Committee be increased to ten.

Resolved, 2d. That the Convention define the classes of complaints that the Arbitration Committee shall be required to act on, as follows:

a.—That the Convention pass a rule requiring all complaints to the Arbitration Committee to be made in writing, and accompanied by positive proof of the violation of rules complained of.

b.—No complaint shall be presented to the Arbitration Committee from any locality where a local organization exists, unless the complaint shall have first been presented to the local organization, and by that organization referred to the Arbitration Committee.

c.—When any five firms, or any regularly-constituted local organization, may ask from the Arbitration Committee a decision on an point, such decision shall be made and published; but when any single dealer or firm requests a decision, such decision shall be communicated only to the party asking the decision.

Resolved, 3d. That the American Book-Trade Association respectfully request publishers and jobbers, when convinced of any underselling in violation of the rules of the American Book-Trade Association, to refuse to sell to such undersellers until they, the undersellers, agree to conform to the rules of the American Book-Trade Association.

4th. Resolved, That the Convention appoint a committee of five to wait on the publishers and respectfully request them to consider the propriety of changing their rule allowing a larger discount than twenty per cent to school-boards and State Normal schools, and to schools supported by religious and benevolent societies purchasing their own supplies; and of establishing a rule allowing no larger discount than twenty per cent to any but dealers, and for first introduction.

On motion, the report was voted upon by sections.

On motion of Mr. Lee, the first resolution was accepted as an amendment to the constitution.

On motion of Mr. Lee, the second resolution, "That the Convention define the classes," etc., was accepted as an amendment to the constitution and by-laws.

On motion of Mr. Lee, subdivision "a" of the second resolution, "That the Convention pass a rule requiring all complaints," etc., was adopted as an amendment to the constitution and by-laws.

In like manner, subdivision "b" of the second resolution, "That no complaints shall be presented to the Arbitration Committee," etc., was added to the constitution and by-laws.

In regard to the subdivision "c" of the second resolution, Mr. Lee moved that it be amended so as to read, "Such decision *may* be made and published," instead of "*shall* be made and published."

The motion was seconded.

MR. CUSHING.—Mr. Chairman, although I don't hold myself bound as chairman of the Committee of Thirty to uphold all its recommendations, I would like to say that I must disagree with the proposition to insert the word *may* instead of *shall*. I think that the trade rather feel that when five firms demand from any local association a decision on a rule of this Convention, the trade have a right to call for that decision for their guidance. I think we have made a mistake all along in putting "*may*" too frequently where we should have put "*shall*." [Applause.] I think when any request from any five firms is made, the Arbitration Committee must publish a decision of some kind. Therefore I hope the amendment will not be adopted, but that the report will be adopted as it came from the Committee.

MR. LEE.—If in order, I would withdraw my amendment, and move that the resolution or by-law as proposed by the Committee of Thirty be adopted as part of the constitution and by-laws of this Association.

Seconded and carried.

Mr. Kimball moved that the third resolution, "That the American Book-Trade Association respectfully request publishers and jobbers," etc., be laid on the table. Seconded.

MR. CUSHING.—I think this resolution is the key-note of this Convention. I don't think it should be put in such a shape that there can be no discussion on it. If the gentleman opposes the resolution, that is perfectly right; but I do not think it is right to shut off the resolution without any debate.

Mr. Kimball's motion, being put to vote, was lost.

On motion of Mr. Lee, the resolution was adopted as part of the constitution and by-laws of the Association.

Mr. Cushing stated that one resolution remaining happened to be in the hands of Captain Wood, and would be presented when he arrived.

THE CHAIR.—If there is no further business before the Convention, we are now ready to hear Mr. Rogers.

The Reduction of Retail Prices.

MR. ROGERS.—There was a communication last night presented from the Central Booksellers' Association and handed to the Committee of Thirty which was well considered, but I think that, had different action been taken, the Convention would all have been better satisfied with the result.

He therefore offered a resolution as follows:

Whereas, Some of the publishers have already reduced the retail price of many of their publications, and there has been a shortening of discounts, and as we are creditably informed that reductions in retail prices of other books are to be made, and as the embarrassments and difficulties of the trade appear to arise mainly

from the unwise system of discounts to consumers, therefore be it

Resolved, That the American Book-Trade Association appoint a special committee of five, to act with a like committee of the Central Booksellers' Association, to confer, as far as possible, with all the publishers of the country, to consider the subject and try to effect, as far as possible, and at as early a day as consistent, a general reduction in the retail prices of books; and in lieu thereof at the same time make an arrangement to abolish all discounts to consumers who buy at retail within the current year; and to report their proceedings at our next annual meeting.

Mr. Lee moved that the preamble and resolution be referred, according to the rules of the Convention, to the Committee of Thirty.

Mr. Rogers thought that the Convention should vote on it now.

The Chair stated that under the rules, the preamble and resolution had to go to the Committee of Thirty.

MR. LEE.—That is the rule of the Convention. You can make a motion to amend it, or a motion to report at a certain time.

MR. ROGERS.—That is what I ask you to do, and I will ask the Association to waive the rule and at once consider the resolution which I have offered.

MR. SHELDON.—We have been here now forty-eight hours, and it strikes me that business of this nature is certainly new business and should wait until these reports are received—the report of the committee of which Mr. Randolph is chairman. I suggest we had better get through this necessary business before we take up new matter.

MR. ROGERS.—I have no objection that the resolution be carried over, but I do object to any thing being done that will put it out of sight for a whole year. I consent that it should lie over until the other reports are read.

Revision of the Constitution.

MR. SHELDON.—There was a committee appointed the day before yesterday, of which our honorable President was chairman, to consider the question of revising the constitution. Owing to the indisposition of the President this morning, he requested me to present this report. We had quite a lengthy discussion, and we concluded that the fewer changes made the better in the organic law of the Association. But two or three changes were contemplated, which made it necessary to add one or two additional articles to the constitution. We therefore decided, with the exception of one or two points, to make no alterations in the constitution as it now stands.

The Arbitration Committee is increased from five to ten members, the object being to make four a quorum. The idea of that is that it might be more easy to hold meetings of this committee. And it was also suggested that meetings be held four times a year.

The next change is in Article Eight, "*The Committee on Arbitration shall take cognizance of all complaints*," simply striking out "*made against members*," so that they "*may have cognizance of complaints*," whether made against members or not.

The Fifteenth Article reads: "That there shall be a General Secretary of this Organization, to be appointed by the Executive Com-

mittee, who shall act as clerk to all the permanent committees, and have charge of all the books and papers of the Association except those of the Treasurer."

The Sixteenth is: "There shall be a permanent Committee on Book Fairs, consisting of seven members, who shall have entire charge of the semi-annual book sales. This committee shall be elected at the same time as the other committees."

On motion of Mr. Wiley, the amendments were adopted as a whole.

Mr. Cushing called up for consideration the Fourth Resolution of the Committee of Thirty.

On motion of Mr. Lee, the Fourth Resolution of the Committee of Thirty was adopted by the Convention.

On motion of Mr. Clapp, seconded in some apologetic remarks by Mr. Knight, who suggested that the Committee had not treated Mr. Roys and Mr. Baird with the proper courtesy, these gentlemen were requested to hand the speeches they intended to make to the reporters, to be entered as part of the proceedings of the meeting. The motion was carried. [The speeches, however, were not furnished by these gentlemen, and therefore do not appear in the report.—R. B. K., stenographer.] Mr. Lee pleaded in extenuation of their treatment the state of the thermometer.

Underselling again.

MR. INGHAM.—I would like to make an inquiry of the trade. We have now before us, and we have passed, a resolution on underselling. The inquiry I want to make is, How do we stand, in the report we have made, as to continued underselling? We have heard from Cincinnati of their selling medical books in violation to the rules, and at Columbus of their selling to libraries. Now, in what relation do we stand, after passing these rules, to the continuation of that violation? Is it permitted, under the present state of things, or does the Convention intend to apply the rule hereafter?

THE CHAIR.—The law has not been changed, and if you desire any change, you must offer a resolution to that effect.

MR. INGHAM.—I can't see what resolution can affect it. We have passed the resolution, and I want to know what the effect is. Does the Convention sanction its repudiation—these violations?

MR. CUSHING.—I must rise to a point of order. If Mr. Ingham has a resolution, we will hear it if offered in writing.

Mr. Lee moved that parties having resolutions to offer shall offer them in writing, which motion prevailed.

The "Large Buyer" Question.

Mr. Coates introduced the following resolution, which was adopted:

Resolved, That the Arbitration Committee be authorized to take such measures as in their judgment will best bring about unity of action among the different members of the trade in regard to the definition of the term "large buyer."

Retail Prices Again.

MR. ROGERS.—If in order, I should like to call for my resolution.

THE CHAIR.—It is not in order.

MR. COATES.—I think you had better leave

that whole subject to the Arbitration Committee. I think they are representatives of the different branches of the trades, and I for one, without knowing who they are, am willing to leave the subject to them entirely.

The Chair stated that Mr. Rogers would now be in order.

Mr. Rogers, after reading the preamble and resolution (already in the minutes), moved that the rules be suspended, to allow them to be at once considered. Seconded.

MR. ROGERS.—I merely ask you to allow this resolution to be now considered. If referred to the Committee of Thirty, it effectually shuts it out of existence for a whole year, and during that year is the time when we want to effect the work. I ask the Convention to consider it now.

MR. BOWEN.—I hope the Convention will attend to the business necessary and properly before us. It seems to me the question of prices and discounts belongs properly to the publisher, and the less we say and do about it, probably the better for the booksellers as well as the publishers. I do hope that the rules will not be suspended, and that this resolution may go where the resolutions of the Conventions have heretofore gone—to the Committee of Thirty.

On being put to vote, the motion was lost.

The Chair required a standing vote, and the resolution to suspend the rules was lost by a vote of twenty to fifteen.

MR. SIMMONS.—I think in the statement of the Committee of Thirty, made during my absence, there was a mistake made which I have stated to the Chairman and Secretary, and both agreed that in place of the indefinite postponement of the resolution in regard to the Book Fair, there was an amendment offered by myself, and accepted, by which we recommend that this Convention pass a recommendation to enable the Committee to take action. I wish the Secretary would please state if that was the fact.

Mr. Knight stated that his recollection was exactly as he had stated it here—that the matter was indefinitely postponed.

MR. LEE.—I made a motion to indefinitely postpone the question of the Book Fair.

Date of Convention.

MR. CUSHING.—I would like to make a report of a resolution passed at the first meeting of the Committee of Thirty.

Resolved, That the Committee of Assemblies call the annual meetings at such time, between the first of June and the first of October, as the Committee may think will best suit the convenience of the trade. Due notice of the time fixed by the Committee shall be given to the trade.

On motion, the resolution was adopted.

The Book Fair Question.

MR. KIMBALL.—There seems to be a slight misunderstanding. I will at this point submit the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Committee on Book Fair be instructed to conduct it in such a manner as will bring the buyer and seller in direct communication, without the aid of any middle

man or men, and that the expenses be divided among contributors.

In presenting this matter, those of us who have had experience have been astonished at the fact that there have been but few contributors and less buyers. But the great thing that stands in the way is the heavy expense, and the necessity of giving endorsed notes. We claim that the best thing to do with this Fair business is to make one great store, like your own store, and to have a place of meeting where the customer can meet seller and the seller meet buyer; where they can meet on the same platform and on the same basis as we do in our own store. I think if we adopt this resolution it will bring to our Fair every department of our trade, the religious societies, the specialties in connection with our business, and thus would present attractions far beyond any thing that has been attained; and I hope that at least the next Fair will be conducted on this basis. [Applause.]

MR. SHELDON.—I think the principle of "instructing" committees is bad business. No Committee has ever yet met knowing exactly what would come before it, and just what form it would take. The object should be to leave the Committee just as free as possible. If any one thing is clear, it is that it is the interest of publishers to conduct this Book Fair so that books may be sold there in the largest quantities and with the best facilities of the trade. Publishers make their books to sell—we don't make them for our private libraries—and any thing that increases interest in the trade, promises to prepare the way just as smoothly and as advantageously as possible towards this end. I think the statements of my friend are in direct contradiction with the report of the Book Fair Committee. He said there were few contributors and fewer buyers. The first Book Fair, which occurred last July, had a wonderful representation of the book-makers of the country. I venture to say that no trade sale has been made in ten years that had one half the houses there. All the school-book publishing houses came in who had not put in an appearance for ten years. It was exceedingly remarkable, and a great surprise, that the great house of Little, Brown & Co., which for many years had kept aloof, was represented. That Fair was a very great success in amount: it was about double any trade sale that has been held for years. As the report stated, the October Fair was held too soon after it, and was not successful. The Fair this spring has not been successful. If any gentleman would tell me what has been successful this spring, I would like to know it. Before our system has had a fair trial, I don't think it right for this Convention to arbitrarily extinguish it; I think this would simply end in there being no Book Fair. The Committee might find it could not carry out these instructions, and the whole thing would fall. We recommend testing this thing one year longer. The Committee look upon it as a problem and an experiment, but think it ought to have a fair and full trial.

MR. KIMBALL.—The gentleman does not like the word "instruct." I move to amend it, to read that it shall be conducted. That is the reason I have never attended the Book Fair, on account of the endorsed notes. We know there are various ways of success. The Committee

has had this matter presented to it time and time again, but that Committee has taken the same view time after time, and has not tried it upon any other plan. I believe I express in this resolution the wishes of most of the publishers and nearly all the consumers in the country. I think we should thus express ourselves, and I hope the Convention will take a very decided stand on this subject.

MR. LEE.—I hope we will not pass any such resolution. I understand that the Committee on Nominations acts with entire accord with the Committee on the Fair, as by the Constitution you have made the Committee on the Fair a standing committee of the Association. It seems to me that if these gentlemen are competent to be put on the Committee, you may trust the management of the Fair to them—whether they will trust competent parties, whether they will give six months' credit, or make them pay cash; for that seems to be the question. I hope the resolution will not pass.

MR. WEST.—I am decidedly in favor of the resolution. I believe the buyers are not willing to contribute a very large amount as commission to any man. I know that some came to me last year that didn't buy at the Book Fair simply because they were required to give an endorsement; and I can not see the objection of dealing directly with the contributor at the Fair. I am decidedly in favor of the adoption of the resolution as offered by Mr. Kimball.

Mr. West also made a personal explanation.

Mr. Carroll moved that the resolution be referred to the Committee on Book Fair, for consideration and action if they should think proper. "We don't want to burden them," he said, "by requiring that they should carry out the objects expressed in such a resolution as this."

Mr. Kimball rose to a point of order.

The resolution was again read, and Mr. Sheldon moved to amend from "that the Committee be instructed" to "that the Committee on Book Fair be requested, if in their view it can be successfully carried out, to conduct it," etc.; striking out the word "instructed," and inserting in place thereof "requested, if in their view it can be successfully carried out." Mr. Kimball accepted the amendment, and the resolution as amended was adopted by the Convention.

FINANCES.

MR. NICHOLSON.—About our finances,—as was stated yesterday, several firms kindly advanced funds to enable us to go on with the work, with the expectation that the money would be raised at this Convention and would be refunded. The amount of the indebtedness above the cash on hand is about \$340. A suggestion has been made, and we have acted upon the suggestion and drawn up the following: "We the undersigned agree to pay the Treasurer of the American Book-Trade Association the amount opposite our respective names, for the present indebtedness and future expenses of the Association." This has been signed by ten firms, and we hope every individual will subscribe just what he feels willing to pay towards the past indebtedness and the future expenses of the Association.

Secondly, the dues for 1876, the annual fees, are \$2. In the first place, we would extend a

cordial invitation to all new-comers who are not members to pay the \$2, and their names will be signed in the constitution for them if they have not the time themselves.

WHO IS A BOOKSELLER?

Mr. Black presented the following resolution :

Resolved, That the Arbitration Committee be requested to define what constitutes "a member of the trade entitled to trade discounts."

Mr. Sheldon said that was one of those things no fellow could do.

MR. CLAPP.—The Central Booksellers' Association spent five hours to try to find that out. They came to a decision, and it stands on the records of this Association.

The resolution was adopted.

OFFICIAL JOURNALS.

Mr. Ticknor offered the following resolution, which was adopted :

Resolved, That hereafter the official organs of this Association shall be the PUBLISHERS' WEEKLY and the *Bookseller*.

In offering the above, Mr. Ticknor said : We have two first-class organs which give much attention to our business, and I think we ought to recognize them both as the organs of the Association.

Officers.

The Chair called for the report of the Nominating Committee.

Mr. Barnes said that the first question that came before the Committee was whether they should recognize the principle of rotation in office or whether the most efficient officers should be retained. After some discussion it was the unanimous opinion of the Committee that rotation in office was the proper plan of distributing the offices of the Association.

After consultation with Mr. Randolph, he heartily accepted the plan, and will retain a prominent position on the Executive Committee, and give the Association the benefit of his moral influence and great strength and all the force pertaining to the office. Mr. J. B. Lippincott was nominated for President, but I regret that this gentleman is unwilling to accept the position, and we have therefore nominated perhaps the veteran of the entire trade in the country, now that Mr. Fletcher Harper is retiring partly from business—Mr. W. H. Appleton, of D. Appleton & Co., New York. For First Vice-President, his friend and neighbor with whom he has worked, and who has been one of our faithful workers from the first, although we have not honored him with any official position as yet, Mr. Isaac E. Sheldon, of New York. For Second Vice-President, Mr. John R. Walsh, of the American News Co., Chicago, the Napoleon of the West. For Third Vice-President, our friend Mr. William Lee, of Lee & Shepard, Boston.

MR. LEE.—I must decline the honor.

Mr. Barnes, without paying attention to the observation of Mr. Lee, proceeded to read the balance of the nominations as follows :

For Treasurer—Joseph Knight, of H. B. Nims & Co., Troy.

For Recording Secretary—B. H. Ticknor, of J. R. Osgood & Co., Boston.

For Corresponding Secretary—W. T. Pratt, of Baker, Pratt & Co., New York.

Executive Committee : A. D. F. Randolph, of A. D. F. Randolph & Co., New York ; C. C. Haffelfinger, of Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philadelphia ; J. L. Hammett, of J. L. Hammett & Co., Boston ; H. H. Vail, of Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati ; T. F. Nicholson, of Richmond, Ind. ; J. B. Piet, of Kelly & Piet, Baltimore ; C. A. Clapp, of E. P. Dutton & Co., New York ; A. C. Armstrong, of Scribner, Armstrong & Co., New York ; S. S. Hadley, of Hadley Brothers, Chicago ; A. C. Barnes, of A. S. Barnes & Co., New York.

Assembly Committee : J. A. Black, of Presbyterian Board of Publication, Philadelphia ; C. T. Dillingham, of New York ; Frank H. Dodd, of Dodd & Mead, New York ; W. H. Gross, of Brown & Gross, Hartford ; Samuel Rogers, of Lockport.

Arbitration Committee : H. E. Simmons, of American Tract Society, New York ; J. M. Cushing, of Cushing & Bailey, Baltimore ; A. C. Armstrong, of Scribner, Armstrong & Co., New York ; T. W. Deland, of Little, Brown & Co., Boston ; Charles Wiley, of J. Wiley & Sons, New York ; Alexander Hill, of R. Clark & Co., Cincinnati ; W. F. Draper, of Andover ; H. T. Coates, of Porter & Coates, Philadelphia ; S. T. Bowen, of Bowen, Stewart & Co., Indianapolis ; Martin Taylor, of Buffalo.

Finance Committee : H. H. West, of West & Co., Milwaukee ; J. R. Blakiston, of Lindsay & Blakiston, Philadelphia ; Henry Hoyt, Jr., of Boston ; D. H. Carroll, of M. E. Book Concern, Baltimore ; J. B. Putnam, of G. H. Putnam's Sons, New York.

Committee on Book Fair : J. R. Osgood, of J. R. Osgood & Co., Boston ; A. C. Armstrong, of Scribner, Armstrong & Co., New York ; W. W. Appleton, of D. Appleton & Co., New York ; Robert Porter, of Porter & Coates, Philadelphia ; H. W. Curtiss, of A. S. Barnes & Co., New York ; George Wood, of J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia ; P. Farrelly, of American News Co., New York.

Mr. Coates desired to be excused from the Arbitration Committee.

The Chair said the question would have to come before the Convention, whether it would excuse Mr. Coates or not.

Mr. Cushing moved that the resignation be not accepted, which motion prevailed.

MR. LEE.—I deem it my duty to decline the honor conferred upon me, for reasons well known to all of you. I must firmly and earnestly decline to hold any official position for the present in this honorable Association.

Mr. Simmons requested that the name of Mr. Cushing be placed before his own on the Arbitration Committee.

Mr. Cushing moved that Mr. Lee be requested to name a successor to his office.

Mr. Lee said that, not yet occupying the office, he didn't see how he could name a successor.

Mr. Barnes said the Committee would nominate on the Arbitration Committee, in place of Mr. Armstrong, whose name was duplicated, Mr. Bancroft, of California.

MR. LEE.—I would suggest, in place of my name for Vice-President, the name of Mr. Walter Lippincott.

MR. WOODS.—The house with which I am connected appreciates the compliment. I am,

however, authorized to respectfully and positively decline the placing of the name of any of our firm on any committee except the Committee on Book Fair.

The name of Mr. Henry C. Baird was substituted for that of Mr. Lee for Third Vice-President.

Mr. Kimball, on behalf of the Committee of Booksellers of Philadelphia, renewed the cordial invitation to every member of the Convention to participate in the Atlantic City excursion.

Mr. Cushing offered the following resolution, which was adopted :

Resolved, That a committee of three, consisting of the acting president of the Convention, Mr. Lee of Boston, and Mr. Sheldon of New York, be appointed to wait upon General Hawley and ask the pleasure of his presence among us ; and also to draw up resolutions expressing the thanks of the Convention for the many kindnesses received in Philadelphia.

Mr. Cushing stated that General Hawley was now in the building, and could probably be present at once.

The Committee withdrew, and upon returning Mr. Sheldon said : The Committee have the honor to report that they have waited upon General Hawley, President of the Centennial Commission, and he has kindly accompanied us to this platform, where we hope to have some remarks from him. [*Great applause.*]

Remarks of General Hawley.

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen : We are much obliged to you for the courteous resolutions and expressions you have made concerning the Commission, but, for myself and on behalf of the Commission, *we* feel rather obliged to *you*. This room is prepared for just such assemblies ; it is quite at your service ; we are glad you have availed yourselves of it. It is at the service of similar associations during the Exhibition. I feel rather like thanking you for occupying the room.

There was a long period of anxiety, of course, concerning the success of the International Celebration. It is five years since the original act of Congress was passed, four years since the Commission organized and began its work, and three years since the Board of Finance was organized. I am sure I need say very little to you, especially concerning the extraordinary financial depression during the last three years ; I think it quite probable that booksellers know as much about it as any body else, except it may be people of my own calling—newspaper people. [*Applause.*] We sympathize with you. You must be aware that it was no easy operation to interest the American people in this great Exhibition ; certainly it was a great task for the Board of Finance to raise the money. But in one way or another, by the liberality of Pennsylvania and Philadelphia, and the generous subscriptions of private citizens, and finally the loan of Congress, it has all been done, and we don't feel disposed to look back with any thing like lamentation upon the past, and the great Exhibition is before you.

People said the Americans couldn't hold a great exhibition, and it was one of the arguments urged in Congress that in this country we couldn't manage large affairs of that description. I think, as we look back over the field,

there was no single objection which seemed so much like a red rag to a bull as that. [*Applause.*] It was the worst and meanest of all objections. To any man, any American of spirit, who had been in the habit of looking at the extent of this country, the great length and breadth of it, the objection seemed like a reflection on the spirit of the people, and as such we always resented it. [*Applause.*]

The Exhibition is larger now than we even dared to hope two or three years ago, and we are at liberty to say, because we are so told by the foreign commissioners and all of our people who have visited other exhibitions—we feel at liberty to say that it is a great exhibition. [*Cheers.*] No exhibition has had so beautiful a site topographically ; there we are ahead of them all. No exhibition has had buildings so extensive ; but that would be easy to do ; it depends on how big they are built : that is nothing to brag of. In some departments I think we feel quite confident that we surpass any previous exhibition ; so our foreign friends very generously and heartily tell us. At any rate, without stopping to say these things now, the Exhibition is before you, and we invite you and all Americans to come here and look at it, and study it, and see what is the best that we have been able to do under the circumstances. Of course we want every body's fifty cents ; but I feel individually sorry for the man that does not come here. [*Applause.*]

There is abundant reason to be proud of what Americans have done in almost every field of human activity. I am, for one, proud of that magnificent Machinery Hall ; the like of it has never been seen in the world before. That great engine is a poem of itself. There never has been such an exhibition in the world of printing machinery of all classes, from the little toy presses up to the magnificent development of Walter and Hoe and Bullock. The great advance made in the last three or four years alone is very well exhibited here. When I say that, I am just repeating the words of the best judge of machinery in the world, from Europe, as he repeated it to me in my office yesterday afternoon.

We have great reason to be gratified in another respect. Some objectors said foreign nations wouldn't come here ; that it was a family affair ; that the occasion was such that we couldn't very well ask other people to come here and join the exhibition which was in some measure a celebration also. That proved to be a mistake. Every American has reason to felicitate himself upon the very pleasant, hearty, and cordial terms in which the invitation has been accepted by the people of all nations, and the extraordinary spirit of enterprise with which they have come. First, those whom we as small boys were taught to look upon as enemies—the English. [*Cheers.*] I say, as exhibitors, and as thoughtful, kindly friends and advisers in all this matter, from the beginning to the end, they may be said to stand at the head ; and we are glad to see them there. There has been more or less irritation between this country and Spain for a good many years, and there has been an endeavor on the part of some thoughtless and foolish people to bring about serious difficulties. It is therefore a thing to be pleased with, to see the energetic and thorough exhibit that Spain has brought here. [*Cheers.*] It is a remarkable exhibit, if you will take

the trouble to look at it. Further, by way of illustration, take Sweden and Norway. In thinking of the Exhibition, in the first place you would naturally think of the wonderful work of France and England. If you have not had time, take it by and by, and see what Sweden and Norway have done, and how to much those people have expended here, and some of you it may serve as matter of reproach to see that your own States have done so little when you find people so far off spending large sums of money, not only for commercial reasons, but, as they frankly say, to show their good-will to the American people. [*Applause.*] There is another thing that marks the progress of the world—the extraordinary exhibits of Japan. I remember in my old Olney's geography where there was a picture of the Japanese trampling upon the cross and we were accustomed to look upon them as a very wicked and barbarous people. Go into their exhibit in the Main Building and see if they are altogether wicked and heathen and barbarous; and see whether there may not be something in their ancient civilization and religion and belief, imperfect as we have been led to believe it, that deserves a more reasonable consideration than we have been apt to give it.

But I am going off on the topic which my wife warns me never to touch when I speak in public. [*Laughter.*] The Exhibition is something more than a mere commercial venture. It is enormous. And we shall find there is no school like it; there never has been one like it. If I were bringing up twenty young men, sixteen or eighteen years of age, I should think it the best thing to put them here, under competent advisers, and have them go through this entire Exhibition. These Exhibitions have a great influence, and this will doubtless do something towards bringing about a better state of feeling in the world. It is impossible to get these countries so easily into war as heretofore, when they send thirty or forty of their best people here to form friendships and to show their exhibits; friendships which are likely to have something to do in influencing and modifying an unkind feeling. I regard the Exhibition as having very great influence, not only in a commercial point of view, but in a moral and spiritual direction; and if all goes on as well as it has so far, to the end, and we are able to pay our debts, I shall be very proud, I think, that I have had something to do with it for the last three or four years; and I shall think that, whatever our opponents may have said, it was, on the whole, rather an appropriate way to celebrate the Centennial, to bring together the products of mankind as evidences of the enormous progress man has made in all material things, and to renew the strength of the bonds of peace among men. [*Great applause.*]

Upon concluding, General Hawley was decorated with the badge of the Association.

On motion of Mr. Lee, the Executive Committee was requested to have printed, for the use of members and for distribution, copies of the newly-prepared constitution, at as early a day as possible, the number to be left to their discretion.

RESOLUTIONS OF THANKS.

MR. SHELDON.—Your Committee appointed a few minutes since to invite General Hawley

to be present with us, and to prepare also some resolutions concerning the sense of this Convention, having had so brief a time, have been entirely unable to do justice to the subject, but will offer these brief resolutions, and hope at some future day to amplify them in more eloquent terms.

Mr. Sheldon then read the following:

Resolved, That this Convention most cordially thank the President of the Centennial Commission, and also all members of the Commission, for the use of the Judges' Pavilion on the Centennial Grounds, which they so kindly tendered to us in which to hold our meetings.

Resolved, That this Convention also cordially thank the members of the Philadelphia book trade for the great courtesy which they have extended to us all, and that we accept with pleasure their cordial invitation to visit Atlantic City with them.

The resolutions were adopted.

The Chair stated that the Convention was about to adjourn, if there was no further business before it. If any one present had any thing to say, the Convention would be glad to hear it.

Mr. Lee said that Mr. T. B. Pugh had extended an invitation to all members of the Convention to visit the Colosseum. Their badges would admit them.

The Convention then adjourned.

THE EXCURSION.

(From the Philadelphia *Inquirer* and other sources.)

By invitation of the Philadelphia trade the members of the American Book-Trade Association made an excursion to Atlantic City on Friday, July 14th.

The excursion-train consisted of five cars, all of which were well filled with the members of the national and city organizations, most of the gentlemen being accompanied by ladies. The entire party numbered between two hundred and fifty and three hundred. The locomotive which drew the train was gayly decorated with American flags, and on the front was fastened a blue ensign, containing in white letters the words "American Book Trade, 1876."

In addition to the gentlemen who took part in the Convention, representing the largest publishing firms in all parts of the country, there was a large representation of the Philadelphia trade on board the train, together with President Lucas and Secretary Zimmerman, of the Camden and Atlantic Railroad Company; Mr. Alvaringo, a member, and Mr. Continho, Secretary, of the Brazilian Commission; General Charles B. Norton, of the Centennial Bureau of Revenue, and other prominent gentlemen.

The party left Camden shortly after nine o'clock. The air was cool and pure. The road was smooth and without the slightest dust, and the run was made at a rapid rate.

At Egg Harbor City a halt was made to enable the excursionists to respond to an invitation extended by the grape-growers of that place for them to sample the wines produced there. On hastily-improvized rustic tables, that made their burdens look all the more inviting, there was an abundance of wine served, specimens of the vintage of Julius Hinckman, Charles Saulman, August Heil, J. Ph. Wild,

Francis Richter, William H. Bolte, J. H. Bennihr, George Karrer, George Mueller, P. M. Wollseiffer's Sons, A. Stephany, William Stroetman, Henry Meyer, Francis Dorms, and others.

Many of the visitors were surprised alike at the excellence of the wine and at the extent attained by the business of wine-growing at Egg Harbor City. It is claimed for the wine that it equals in fineness many of the best brands of the imported, while costing 100 per cent less. Last fall about a half million gallons were produced by the enterprising vineyardists of this place, and next fall, despite the harm done by the frosts last May, a not less quantity will be vinted. Twenty years ago the site of the flourishing town was an uncultivated waste.

When the excursionists had partaken of the hospitable offerings of the wine-growers, Mr. Zimmerman introduced Captain Saulman and Mr. Julius Hinckman, leading wine-growers of the place, each of whom made short addresses, which were received with cheers by the listeners.

The remaining eighteen miles of the trip down were made in a little over half an hour. The train stopped in front of the United States Hotel, at which the excursionists quartered during the day.

The blue ensign of the trade was transferred from the locomotive to a spot over the main entrance to the hotel, and as the excursionists marched under its folds, the band stationed at the hotel played a lively selection. In less than half an hour after their arrival a large portion of the excursionists had thrown themselves into the hearty embraces of old Neptune. The bathing was glorious, and the tide just right for the purpose.

Shortly after one o'clock dinner was called, and the guests, in numbers which gave the spacious dining-room a very animated appearance, seated themselves at the attractive tables, Mr. J. B. Mitchell, of Messrs. J. B. Lippincott & Co., presiding.

After an hour had passed in the pleasant task of despatching one of the most elegant dinners that even Messrs. Brown & Woelpper ever spread before a party appetized by a long railroad journey and subsequent salt-water bath, the company was rapped to order by Mr. Mitchell, who said:

Ladies and Gentlemen: It was intended that Mr. Lippincott, the senior of our house, should have presided on this occasion, and it would have been a grateful duty to him, but for a rheumatic lameness that he has been suffering, and which has obliged him to leave the city. In his hands it would have been executed gracefully and acceptably to you. In attempting the performance of this duty myself, therefore, I must beg your kind indulgence for any shortcomings, and ask you to attribute them to my inexperience.

I appreciate very highly, however, the honor of presiding over an assemblage of publishers and booksellers brought together from all the main points of our great country.

Your close relations to the authors, that class who, in connection with the newspapers, have so much to do with forming the moral tone and sentiment of the time, and the necessity of such relations to them in creating a circulation for their works and a market for their thoughts,

gives to the book business an important position in the progress of improvement.

Perhaps neither the authors nor the public sufficiently realize this, but that it should be our duty to correct. It is not my purpose, however, to make a speech to you, but rather to introduce to you a gentleman whom I know you will be pleased to hear. [Applause.] I propose, as the first sentiment, "The book trade of the United States: its growth in the past has kept pace with the progress of the country. May the dawn of our second century be the dawn of a brighter era for it." I would call on Mr. J. F. Cushing, of Baltimore, to respond.

Mr. Cushing thought so young a man as he should not have been called on to answer a toast so big and so old. [Laughter.] Moreover, there was too much in it for a man of almost any age to respond to under prevailing circumstances. There was one portion of it that he would confine himself to, and that was one that would interest all present—the Philadelphia Book-Trade Association. [Applause.] The speaker then, after suitable allusion to the Centennial celebration, said that the National Association had been fortunate in coming with its Convention to this city, which the visitors had found to be one of truly brotherly love. They had not only come at a time when the city contained the greatest school the world ever presented, but they had found here a lively and unbounded hospitality that had been most grateful to them. Mr. Cushing, in conclusion, expressed the hope that the booksellers at the late Convention had inaugurated a new era for the trade.

"The Ladies" was then offered as a sentiment, and Mr. H. H. Kimball, of Philadelphia, called on for a response.

Mr. Kimball regretted that for so noble a sentiment a respondent with more eloquence had not been called upon. He then proceeded with some humorous remarks, and made several hits that were understood and enjoyed by the members of the trade.

"The Press: one of the most colossal powers of the day," was next offered, and Mr. W. W. Harding was called for.

Mr. Harding, in arising to reply, said he had been put into the same predicament his friend Mr. Kimball found himself in. For a theme so great a speaker of corresponding gift of eloquence should be selected. In a few brief remarks he then referred to the inseparable relations between the press and pure book literature as an agency in educating the people and conserving public morality, and concluded with some humorous references to remarks made by the previous speakers.

The last toast was "The Railroad Interests," and Mr. John Lucas, President of the Camden and Atlantic Railroad Company, responded briefly by saying that "If the Association wants a more vigorous, intelligent, and energetic race of both book publishers and readers, it must induce them all to come down for a time to this beautiful city by the sea. [Laughter and applause.]

The company then dispersed, and was subsequently divided up into little parties, some of whom strolled and others drove along the beach, went sailing, fishing, bathing, etc.

Before leaving the United States Hotel the members of the Convention assembled and or-

ganized, with the Vice-President, Mr. Wesley Jones, in the chair. Mr. Jones, in calling to order, said :

I esteem it my privilege, as the President of this Association, to call you together for the purpose of expressing our thanks to the Philadelphia book trade for the hospitable manner in which we have been treated during our stay with them. He appointed Messrs. H. E. Simmons, D. Lathrop, and Charles Humphreys a committee of three to draft resolutions suitably expressing the esteem of the members of the National Association for the members of the Philadelphia Association, and their thanks for the attention of the latter. The following resolutions were soon after reported by the committee and unanimously adopted amid hearty cheers :

Resolved, That the members of the American Book-Trade Association hereby express to the Philadelphia book trade our hearty appreciation of their admirable arrangements, which have made the meeting at Philadelphia one of the pleasantest that has ever been held.

Resolved, That after a day of unalloyed pleasure spent as their guests, we desire to convey to them our heartfelt thanks for the kindly feeling, untiring efforts, and personal exertions used by each of them to make this entertainment one of the most perfect in conception and complete in the minutest detail of execution that it has ever been our good fortune to be participants in.

The excursion started back to the city at six o'clock, and reached Camden at eight o'clock. The affair was one of unqualified enjoyment, and will be remembered pleasantly by all who participated. The committee having charge of the arrangements were J. B. Mitchell, of J. B. Lippincott & Co. ; John A. Black, of the Presbyterian Board of Publication ; C. C. Haffelfinger, of Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger ; Robert Porter, of Porter & Coates ; James H. Eldredge, of Eldredge & Brother ; and H. H. Kimball, of J. B. Lippincott & Co.

Enrolment List of the Convention.

Alexander, Geo. W., New York.
Amies, Wm. T., W. W. Harding, Philadelphia.
Ammon, John H., Jas. R. Osgood & Co., Boston.
Anderson, W. J., Anderson & Cameron, New York.
Armstrong, A. C. and son, Scribner, Armstrong & Co., New York.
Bainbridge, Chas. T., Porter & Bainbridge, New York.
Baird, Henry C., H. C. Baird & Co., Phila.
Barling, S., Thos. Nelson & Sons, New-York.
Barnes, A. C., A. S. Barnes & Co., New-York.
Bierbower, F. A., Geo. E. Stevens & Co., Cin.
Blakiston, P., Lindsay & Blakiston, Phila.
Bostick, I. F., Bostick & Co. Richmond, Ind.
Bowen, Silas T., Bowen, Stewart & Co., Indianapolis.
Bowker, R. R., *Publishers' Weekly*, New York.
Brown, T. J., Brown, Eager & Co., Toledo, O.
Buckman, Girard, Porter & Coates, Phila.

Carroll, D. H., Methodist Book Depos., Baltimore.
Cassil, A. A., Chase & Cassil, Mt. Vernon, O.
Chapman, E. O., *Am. Bookseller*, New York.
Clapp, C. A., E. P. Dutton & Co., New York.
Clarke, J. W., Ingham, Clark & Co., Cleveland, Ohio.
Coates, Henry T., Porter & Coates, Phila.
Cole, Sidney H., West & Co., Milwaukee, Wis.
Collins, C. G., American News Co., New York.
Conway, J. G., T. B. Peterson & Bros., Phila.
Cox, Samuel C., Geo. E. Stevens & Co., Cin.
Curtis, John J., Bowen, Stewart & Co., Indianapolis, Ind.
Cushing, Jos. M., Cushing & Bailey, Baltimore.
Diehl, T. H., S. K. Brobst & Co., Allentown, Pa.
Dillingham, A. H., with C. T. Dillingham, New York.
Dillingham, Chas. T., New York.
Dinsmore, J. P., Carter, Dinsmore & Co., New York.
Dodd, Frank H., Dodd, Mead & Co., New York.
Draper, W. F., Andover, Mass.
Dunkinson, F. H., F. H. Dunkinson & Co., New York.
Eaton, Chas. W., Eaton, Lyon & Co., Grand Rapids, Mich.
Eaton, Darwin G., Bowen, Stewart & Co., Indianapolis.
Eldredge, James H., Eldredge & Bro., Phila.
English, J. A., Smith, English & Co., Phila.
Farrelly, Patrick, American News Co., New York.
Ferguson, A. E., Grosvenor & Harger, Dubuque, Iowa.
Flack, Alonzo, Alonzo Flack & Bro., Claverack, N. Y.
Fortescue, W. S., W. S. Fortescue & Co., Phila.
Fouret, René (Hachette & Co.), Paris.
Frazer, J. J., Southworth Co., Mittineaque, Mass.
Freeman, Geo. A., American Lead-Pencil Co. New York.
Gardner, Dorsey, Asst. Secretary Cent. Com., Philadelphia.
Garrigues, Samuel B., Garrigues Bros., Phila.
Geyer, Andrew, *American Stationer*, New York.
Giles, E. W., Esterbrook Steel Pen Co., Camden, N. J.
Glacel, Joseph, Glacel & Co., New York.
Godecke, E. L., Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cin.
Gould, Geo. M., Gould & Silvus, Chillicothe, Ohio.
Graves, Geo. H.
Griffith, B., American Baptist Publishing Soc., Philadelphia.
Gross, Wm. H., Brown & Gross, Hartford, Ct.
Guernsey, H. W., Potter, Ainsworth & Co., New York.
Hafely, F. E., Pott, Young & Co., New York.
Hammett, J. L., Boston.

- Hanford, E. T., S. R. Morgan & Co., Middletown, N. Y.
- Helm, J. W., Merrill, Hubbard & Co., Indianapolis.
- Hill, Alex., Robert Clarke & Co., Cincinnati.
- Holden, Geo. W., Payne, Holden & Co., Dayton, Ohio.
- Hopkins, I. A., Hopkins & Son, Washington, D. C.
- Houghton, W. A., Colton, Zahm & Roberts, New York.
- Hoyt, W. H., Henry Hoyt, Boston.
- Humphrey, Chas., Adrian, Mich.
- Ingham, W. A., Ingham, Clarke & Co., Cleveland, Ohio.
- Jones, Wesley, Burlington, Iowa.
- Keen, Joseph, Keen, Cooke & Co., Chicago.
- Keil, L. D., Keil & Bro., Fort Wayne, Ind.
- Kent, James G., *Publishers' Weekly*, New York.
- Kenyon, R. B., Official Stenographer, New York.
- Kimball, H. H., J. B. Lippincott & Co., Phila.
- King, W. F., Adrian, Mich.
- Kirkpatrick, A., Am. Sunday-School Union, Philadelphia.
- Knight, D. F., Knight, Adams & Co., Boston.
- Knight, Jos., H. B. Nims & Co., Troy, N. Y.
- Kurtz, T. Newton, Baltimore, Md.
- Lee, Thos. H., Wilstach, Baldwin & Co., Cin.
- Lee, William, Lee & Shepard, Boston.
- Levy, Henry, Henry Levy & Sons, New York.
- Lippincott, C., J. B. Lippincott & Co., Phila.
- Locke, J. S., J. S. Locke & Co., Boston.
- Lockwood, John, Lockwood, Brooks & Co., Boston.
- Lothrop, D., D. Lothrop & Co., Boston.
- Lovell, I. B., Baptist Board, Philadelphia.
- McGinness, Geo. W., McGinness & Runyan, Princeton, N. J.
- McIntosh, Fred., D. Appleton & Co., New York.
- McQuillan, J. A., Pott, Young & Co., New York.
- Marsh, Arthur E., Thos. Nelson & Sons, New York.
- Martin, J. Parker, A. J. Holman & Co., Phila.
- May, John H., Porter & Coates, Philadelphia.
- Miller, W. W., Young & Miller, Wellsboro, Pa.
- Mitchell, H. F., J. B. Lippincott & Co., Phila.
- Mitchell, J. B., J. B. Lippincott & Co., Phila.
- Monachesi, N. R., *American Bookseller*, New York.
- Myers, Frank.
- Narris, E. C., Richards & Co., Denver, Col.
- Newton, L. V., Erie Publishing Co., Erie, Pa.
- Nicholson, Timothy, Nicholson & Bro., Richmond, Ind.
- Ogden, Chas. H., Ogden Bros., Knoxville, Tenn.
- Paul, Peter, Peter Paul & Bro., Buffalo, N. Y.
- Pease, S. G., with Thos. H. Pease, New Haven, Ct.
- Piet, John B., Kelly, Piet & Co., Baltimore.
- Porter, R., Porter & Coates, Philadelphia.
- Putnam, J. B., G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York.
- Randolph, A. D. F., A. D. F. Randolph & Co., New York.
- Reed, Henry M., Geo. Routledge & Sons, New York.
- Regal, E., Oberlin, Ohio.
- Rogers, Samuel, S. Rogers & Co., Lockport, N. Y.
- Rose, J. B., Jansen, McClurg & Co., Chicago.
- Roys, J. A., Detroit, Mich.
- Schinkel, E. L., Brooks, Schinkel & Co., Cleveland, Ohio.
- Schoffer, Chas. W., Altemus & Co., Phila.
- Shaw, Jerome B., E. G. Selchow & Co., New York.
- Shelby, W. L. H., and wife, Payne, Holden & Co., Dayton, Ohio.
- Sheldon, Isaac E., Sheldon & Co., New York.
- Shuey, W. J., U. B. Pub. House, Dayton, O.
- Sibole, J. L., Sibole & Stellwagen, Phila.
- Siemon, R., Siemon & Bro., Ft. Wayne, Ind.
- Silvus, E. G., Gould & Silvus, Chillicothe, O.
- Simmons, H. E., Am. Tract Society, New York.
- Smith, J. Frederick, Dodd, Mead & Co., New York.
- Smith, N. A., Geo. Routledge & Sons, New York.
- Spamer, Aug., Otto Spamer, Leipsic.
- Sumner, H. A., John Church & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio.
- Swayne, Ed. C., E. P. Dutton & Co., New York.
- Terquem, Emile, Cercle de la Librairie de Paris, Paris.
- Thissell, H. N., American Tract Soc., Phila.
- Thomas, C. F., Boughman, Thomas & Co., Wilmington, Del.
- Thompson, J. A., Thompson, Brown & Co., Boston.
- Tibbitts, W. T., Tibbitts & Randall, Providence, Rhode Island.
- Ticknor, B. H., Jas. R. Osgood & Co., Boston.
- Tripp, S. S., D. H. Tripp & Co., Peoria, Ills.
- Vail, Henry H., Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cin.
- Vandegrift, J. A., Scribner, Welford & Armstrong, New York.
- Waggener, J., Galena, Ill.
- Warren, H. L., A. J. Holman & Co., Phila.
- Watkins, Jas. T., American Lead-Pencil Co., New York.
- Watson, W. H., Aurora, Ills.
- Welch, Arthur E., W. W. Harding, Phila.
- Wendt, Carsten, Official Stenographer, New York.
- West, H. H., West & Co., Milwaukee, Wis.
- Wiley, Chas., John Wiley & Sons, New York.
- Wiley, Wm. H., John Wiley & Sons, New York.
- Wood, Geo., J. B. Lippincott & Co., Phila.
- Woodard, Willard, Geo. Sherwood & Co., Chicago.
- Woodruff, T. D., Quincy, Ill.

Wyman, Wm. W., Thos. Y. Crowell, New York.

Wynkoop, Jas. S., R. G. Wynkoop & Co., Syracuse, N. Y.

Wynne, W. S., Bowen, Stewart & Co., Indianapolis.

LETTERS TO THE CONVENTION.

A NUMBER of letters were sent to the President, but were not read. Some of these were not handed to the reporter; such as were received are given herewith:

BAKER, PRATT & CO., OF NEW YORK.

NEW YORK, July 11, 1876.

A. D. F. RANDOLPH, ESQ., *President American Book-Trade Association*, Philadelphia, Pa.:

DEAR SIR: It is with extreme regret that we find it impracticable for either member of our firm to be present at the Convention this year. Having heretofore taken an active interest in the work of our Association, we desire that our absence should not be considered the outgrowth of a flagging interest. We therefore beg to express through you our most cordial sympathy in the successful accomplishment of all that could be desired by the most enthusiastic advocate of reform. We believe that when the publishers themselves take hold of this matter with the determination to prevent underselling, they will succeed, and find in the jobbers and retailers that co-operation and support which will alone assure success. With best wishes and kind regards, we remain

Very truly yours,

BAKER, PRATT & CO.

MARTIN TAYLOR, OF BUFFALO.

BUFFALO, July 10, 1876.

A. D. F. RANDOLPH, ESQ., *President A. B. T. A.*:

MY DEAR SIR: I regret very much that I am not able to be present at the Convention in Philadelphia.

As I am not quite well, and in view of the extreme heat which prevails there at present, my physician advises me to remain at home.

I feel a deep interest in the result of your deliberations, and hope the measures recommended and adopted may be such as will result favorably to all.

I have observed that some of the publishers have reduced the prices on some of their books, and reduced their discounts on their entire lists. Have just received from a house, who announced the reduction of some retail prices, an invoice of new books, of a series which is in course of publication. In this invoice the retail price is the same as on the books of the same series previously issued, while the discount is shortened to per cent.

It seems to me that this is not the kind of reform we want. It hits the bookseller a hard blow, and does not result in benefit to the public, but must inevitably produce great dissatisfaction.

The popular demand is for cheaper books.

Let our publishers be requested to establish their retail

prices as low as they can, and give the dealer a liberal discount.

Do not abolish the 20 per cent rule to libraries and large buyers, for it has worked well and the people are satisfied.

When all the publishers shall have reduced their retail prices to a uniform standard, it may be wise to limit the discount to libraries, etc., to a smaller percentage; but by all means leave some flexibility to the rod with which we fish for men.

With best wishes for the success of the Convention and the happiness of all, I am

Yours, very truly,

MARTIN TAYLOR, *V. Pres't.*

P. S.—If I might make a motion, it would be that when your Convention adjourns it shall be to meet next year at Niagara Falls, in Prospect Park, in the cool of "the shadow of the rock."

M. T.

D. H. DAVIS, OF COLDWATER, MICH.

COLD WATER, MICH., July 7, 1876.

A. D. F. RANDOLPH, ESQ., *Pres't. Am. B. T. Association.*:

I hoped to be with you at the Convention in Philadelphia, as I was at Put-in-Bay and Niagara Falls. But circumstances seem to forbid my participation in the exercises and privileges of the meeting this year. I need not say that I regret it.

As a member of the book trade, I have greatly enjoyed the Convention, not only in the way of mingling and becoming acquainted with my fellow-tradesmen, but also in gaining more just, enlarged, and liberal views of the trade.

I have felt, too, that in order to advance the interests and carry out the measures of any great reform, it needs the personal, co-operative efforts of all its friends. On this account I have felt under obligations to attend these Conventions.

I am sure that they have accomplished good results in the way of opening the eyes of the book trade to the abuses and evils so prevalent in the book business, degrading it in character, and rendering it unsafe especially for a retail dealer to invest his capital in that class of stock. Publishers have been led to see that their course of dealing with outside parties was unjust and ruinous to their best customers (the retail dealers of the country), and I may add that the same is true also in the case of wholesale dealers. Publishers, wholesale men, and retail dealers are beginning to realize that their interests are mutual; and that each class should so manage their affairs as not to do violence to the rights and interests of the others.

Each class should do its own business, and do it in a legitimate way. If the publisher or wholesale dealer chooses to sell books at retail, let him sell them at full retail rates; then the retail dealer can not complain. And if the publisher or wholesale dealer is called upon to furnish libraries, or professional men, or any other parties outside the regular trade, in large quantities, let him do it at a rate at which the retail dealer can do it, and at the same time leave a reasonable margin for profit. In this way the retail dealer finds protection and can not complain.

But I am protracting this letter too far.

I hope the Convention at Philadelphia will be largely attended, and fruitful of benefits to the Association.

With my respects and best wishes to you individually, I remain

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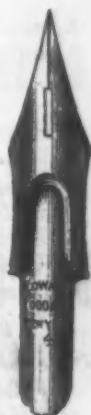
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